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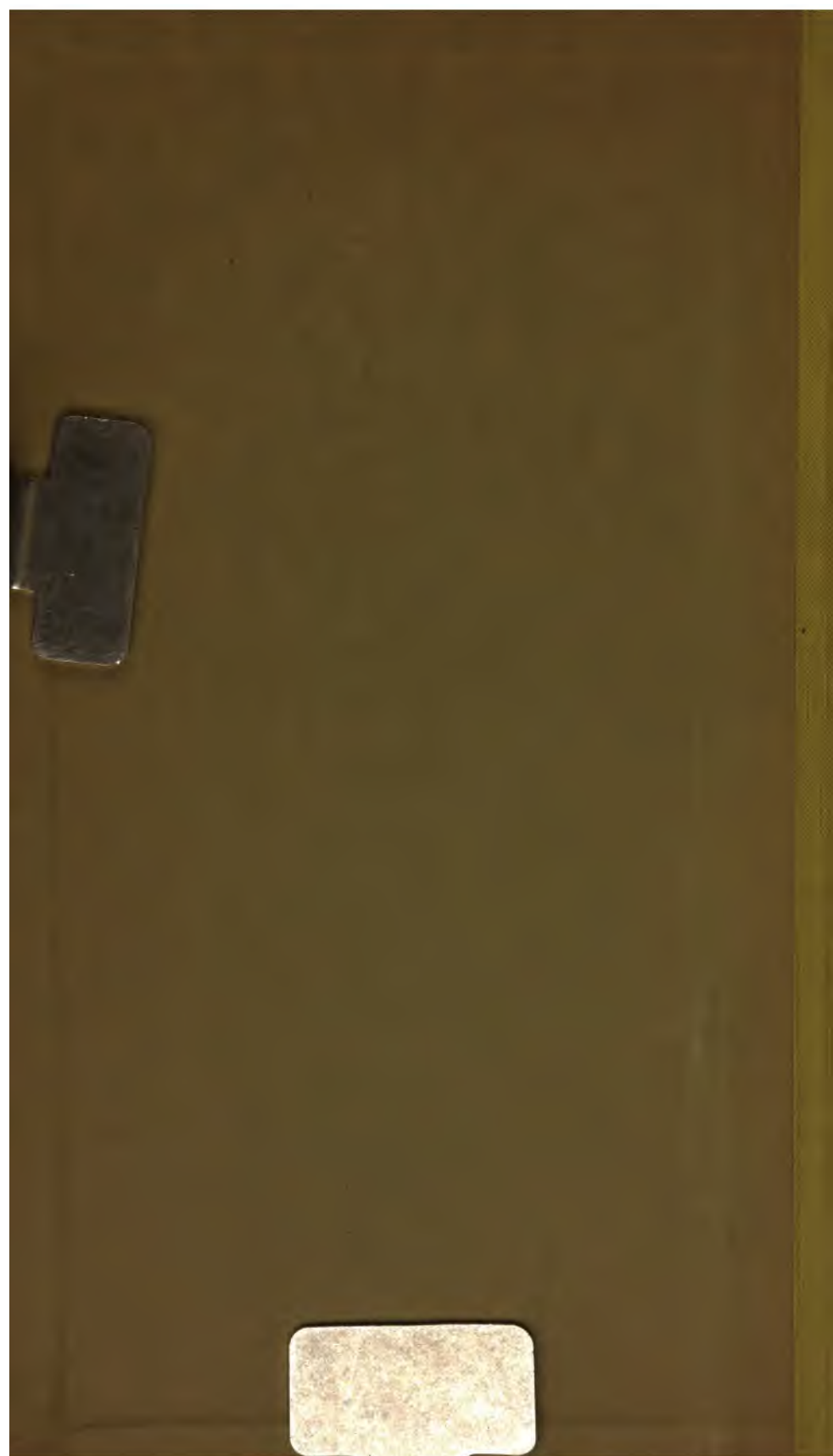
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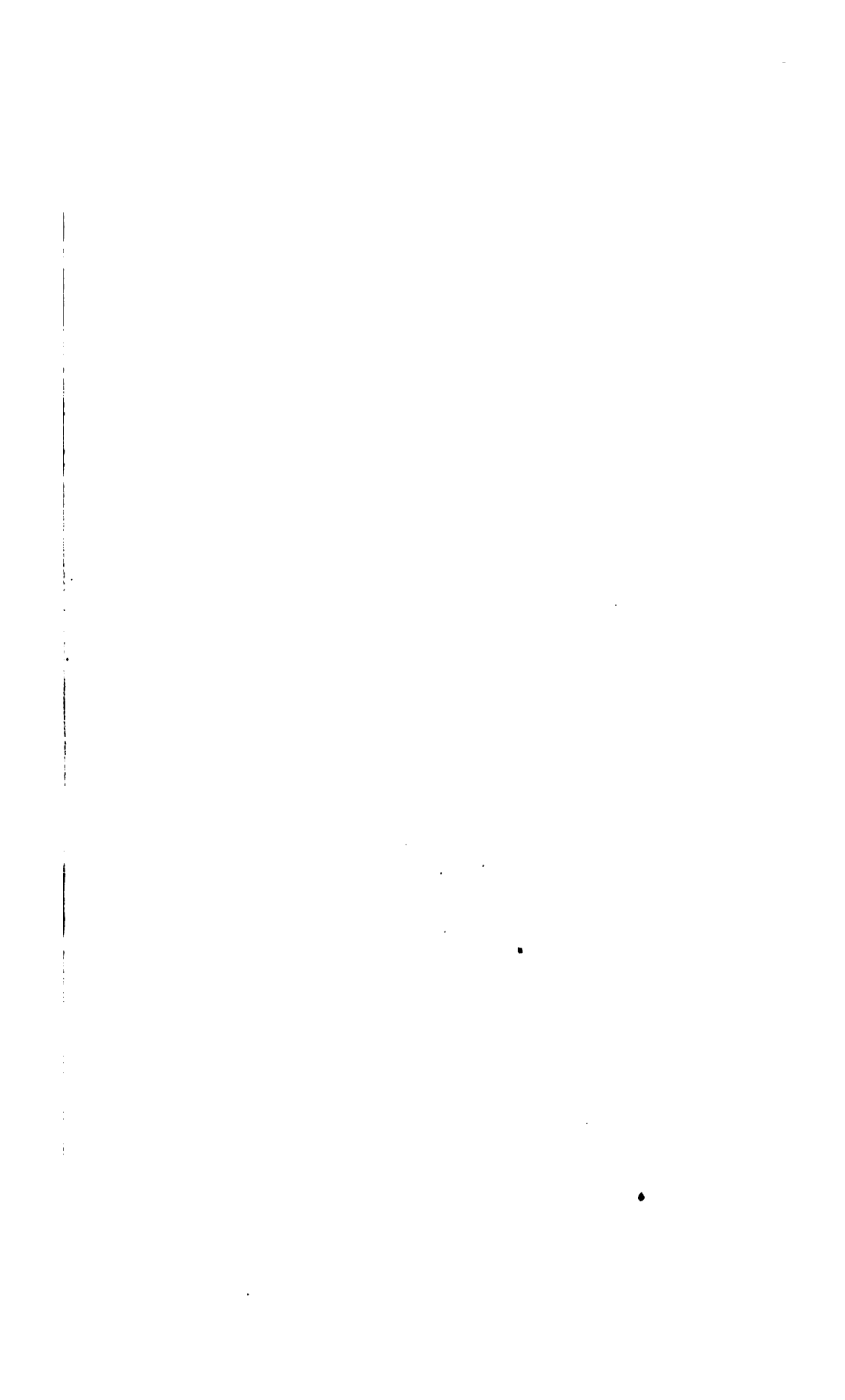


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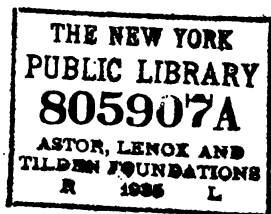
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The following pages are a specimen of a work, intended to combine in a concise view the prominent principles of INTELLECTUAL PHILOSOPHY for the use of students. A variety of subjects remain to be examined, particularly the following ;—CASUAL CONNECTIONS OF THOUGHT, ATTENTION, PRINCIPLES AND MODES OF REASONING, EXTENT OF KNOWLEDGE, MEMORY, IMAGINATION, DREAMING, INSANITY, ORIGIN AND INFLUENCE OF PREJUDICES, ELEMENTS OF BEAUTY AND SUBLIMITY, EARLY EDUCATION, VARIETIES IN INTELLECTUAL CHARACTER, MENTAL DISCIPLINE, VOLITION, &c. The whole is expected to be published soon in about five hundred pages.

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## CHAPTER FIRST.

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### UTILITY OF INTELLECTUAL PHILOSOPHY.

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#### §. 1. *Of the prejudice existing against this science.*

A prejudice prevails against the science of Intellectual Philosophy. It is generally entered upon in our academies and colleges with reluctance, and relinquished without regret. This aversion is not limited to the idle, but includes those, who know the value of time and the importance of mental improvement.

The objections against the Philosophy of the Mind, which have in a great measure given rise to this prejudice, may be principally summed up in two particulars.

#### §. 2. *Of the metaphysics of the schools.*

Of these, one is the frivolous character of the metaphysical writings of the schools.

The origin of those institutions, to which the name of schools is given, was this. By order of a general Council of the Roman Catholick Church, held at Rome in the year 1179, certain persons were appointed to give instructions either in the cathedrals and monasteries, or in some suitable buildings erected near them. The places of instruction were called by the Latin name *scholæ*; the teachers were termed *scholastici*. These minor institutions, some of which had an existence previous to the enactment of



the canons of the Council, which has been mentioned, at length grew up into the more imposing shape of seminaries, answering to the publick literary institutions of modern times. But while there was an alteration in the institutions themselves, and universities and colleges in the end arose from these small beginnings, the same appellations continued.

By the **SCHOOLS**, then, are to be understood the European literary and theological institutions, as they were constituted and regulated from about the middle of the twelfth century to the period of the Protestant reformation. By the **SCHOLASTICK PHILOSOPHY**, using the terms in a general sense, we mean those topicks, which were most examined and insisted on during that period.

The learning of the **SCHOOLS**, may in general be referred to three great divisions, viz.

**ONTOLOGY** or the science of Being in general ;—

**NATURAL THEOLOGY**, which seems to have been the application of the principles of ontology to the particular existences, called God and angels ; and **PNEUMATOLOGY** or doctrines having relation to the human mind.

The following are some of the inquiries, which were warmly agitated during the period now under examination.

Whether the Deity can exist in imaginary space no less than in the space, which is real ? Whether the Deity loves a possible unexisting angel better, than an insect in actual existence ?

Whether the essence of mind be distinct from its existence ? And whether its essence might, therefore, subsist, when it had no actual existence ?

Whether angels can visually discern objects in the dark ? Or whether they can pass from one point of space to another without passing through the intermediate points ?

Such inquiries, it will readily be admitted, were worse than fruitless. But Intellectual Philosophy, as it exists at the present day, evidently ought not to be estimated by what it was in the scholastick ages. If, therefore, the pre-

judice, which has been mentioned as prevailing against this science, be in any measure founded on the frivolous discussions of the schools, it is so far unjust ; since it is now prosecuted on different principles and with different results.

§. 3. *Supposed practical inutility of this science.*

A second ground of the prejudice, existing against this science, is the prevalence of a false opinion of its practical inutility. In studying Intellectual Philosophy, we are supposed in the erroneous opinion, which has been mentioned, to learn in a scientifick form only what we have previously learnt from nature ; we acquire nothing new, and the time, therefore, which is occupied in this pursuit, is mispent.

All persons, however ignorant, know what it is, to think, to imagine, to feel, to perceive, to exercise belief. All persons know the fact in Intellectual Philosophy, that memory depends on attention ; and when asked, why they have forgotten things, which occurred yesterday in their presence, think it a sufficient answer to say, that they did not attend to them. Every body is practically acquainted with the principles of association, even the groom ; who, with all his ignorance of philosophical books, has the sagacity to feed his horses to the sound of the drum and bugle, as a training preparatory to their being employed in military service.

From some facts of this kind, which may safely be admitted to exist, the opinion has arisen of the practical inutility of studying Intellectual Philosophy as a science.

§. 4. *Its supposed practical inutility answered.*

If, however, these facts be admitted to be a valid objection in application to this study, the same objection evidently exists to the study of other sciences, for instance, Natural Philosophy. It is remarked of savages, that they gain an eminence before they throw their missile weapons, in order by the aid of such a position to increase the momentum of what is thrown. They do this without any sci-

entifick knowledge of the accelerating force of gravity. The sailor, who has perhaps never seen a mathematical diagram, practically understands, as is evident from the mode in which he handles the ropes of the vessel, the composition and resolution of forces. In a multitude of instances, we act on principles, which are explained and demonstrated in some of the branches of Natural Philosophy. We act on them, while we are altogether ignorant of the science. But no one, it is presumed, will consider this a good excuse for making no philosophical and systematick inquiries into that department of knowledge.

But without contenting ourselves with this answer to the objection, that the study, upon which we are entering, is of no practical profit, some further remarks will be made, more directly and positively showing its beneficial results.

§. 5. *Intellectual philosophy teaches us how to direct our inquiries.*

It is one of the good results of a knowledge of Intellectual Philosophy, that we are taught by it to limit our inquiries to those subjects, to the investigation of which our capacities are equal and are adapted. The Supreme Being is an all pervading mind, a principle of life, that has an existence in all places and in all space, and whose intelligence is like his omnipresence, acquainted with all things. But man, his creature, is made with an inferiour capacity; he knows only in part, and it is but reasonable to suppose, that there are many things, which he will never be able to know. But, although it be justly admitted, that man is subordinate to the supreme Being and is infinitely inferiour to Him, his Maker has kindly given him aspirations after knowledge, with the power of satisfying in some measure and under certain limitations these natural breathings forth of the soul. If, therefore, man be a being, formed to know, and there be, moreover, certain restrictions, placed upon the capacity of knowledge, it is highly important to ascertain the limitations, whatever they may be, which are imposed. Nor is this always an easy thing to be determin-

ed. There is oftentimes a difficulty in ascertaining precisely the boundary, which runs between the possibility and the impossibility of knowledge, but whenever it is ascertained, there is an indirect increase of mental ability by means of the withdrawment of the mind from unprofitable pursuits, in which there is an expence of effort without any remuneration.

When, for example, a piece of wood, or any other of those material bodies, by which we are surrounded, is presented to any one for his examination, there are some things in this material substance, which may be known, and others, which cannot. Its colour, its hardness or softness, its extension are points, upon which he can inform himself, can reason, can arrive at knowledge. He opens his eye; an impression is made on the organ of vision, and he has the idea of colour. By means of the application of his hand to the wood, he learns the penetrability or impenetrability, the softness or hardness of the mass, which he holds. By moving his hand from one point to another in the mass, he is informed of the continuity or extension of its parts. But when he pushes his inquisition beneath the surface of this body, when he attempts to become acquainted not only with its qualities, but with that supposed something, in which those qualities are often imagined to inhere, and, in a word, expends his efforts, in obedience to this unprofitable determination, in learning what matter is, independently of its properties, he then stumbles on a boundary, which it is not given men to pass, and seeks for knowledge where they are not permitted to know.

The necessity of understanding what things come within the reach of our powers and what do not, was a thought, which laid the foundation of Mr. Locke's Essay on the Human Understanding.

§. 6. *Remarks of Mr. Locke on this point.*

"Were it fit to trouble thee with the history of this Essay (he remarks in the Epistle to the reader) I should tell thee, that five or six friends meeting at my chamber and discours-

ing on a subject very remote from this, found themselves quickly at a stand by the difficulties that arose on every side. After we had awhile puzzled ourselves without coming any nearer a resolution of those doubts, which perplexed us, it came into my thoughts, that we took a wrong course, and that before we set ourselves upon inquiries of that nature, it was necessary to examine our own abilities, and see what objects our understandings were or were not fitted to deal with. This I proposed to the company, who all readily assented, and thereupon it was agreed, that this should be our first inquiry."

Such were the sentiments on this subject of a man, who has probably contributed more largely than any other individual to help us to the correct understanding of the mind; and whose writings, such is their singular originality and acuteness, can hardly be too strongly recommended for perusal.

§. 7. *Helps us in the correction of mental errors.*

A second advantage resulting from the study of the Philosophy of the Mind, is, that it teaches us in many cases to correct whatever deficiencies or errors may exist in our mental constitution.

In our present state of imperfection, while we are found to experience various kinds of bodily evils, we are not exempt from those of the mind; and we know not, that it can any more excite surprise, that some people exhibit mental distortions, than it can; that we daily see not only the healthy and the well-formed, but the "maimed, the halt, and the blind."

If then it be asked, how are these mental defects, which we observe, to be remedied, the answer is obvious, that we should act in regard to the mind, as we do in promoting the restoration of the body; we should commit the business of ascertaining a remedy to those, who are in some good degree acquainted with the subject and with the nature of the disease. A physician, altogether ignorant of the anatomy and physiology of the human system, would

be poorly qualified to relieve a fellow being in sickness, or who had met with a fracture in his limbs. But if knowledge be necessary, in order to heal the weakness of the body and restore it to its proper soundness and beauty, it is not less important in the restoration of analogous evils in the mental constitution.

In looking round to see, whose minds, are disordered and whose are in a sound and healthy condition, we notice, for example, some persons to be troubled with a very weak memory. We have a very candid confession on this point in the writings of Montaigne. He informs us, that he did not trust to his memory. When he had any commands to execute he always punctually committed them to his memorandum book. "I am forced (says he) to call my servants by the names of their employments, or of the countries, where they were born, for I can hardly remember their proper names; and if I should live long, I question, whether I should remember my own name." It appears, however, from his acquaintance with the principles of the ancient philosophers, that he had not much reason to complain, except of his own inattention to this extremely valuable mental operation. He remembered principles; he could keep in recollection the outlines of the sciences, but could not so well remember insulated facts, especially if they related to the occurrences of common life. This peculiarity in the operations of the memory is not unfrequently found among men of letters, especially if they possess a vivid imagination. But it must be considered a mental defect; one, which it is not only important to understand, but to try to remedy.

Since then it must be admitted, that there are diseases and distortions of the mind no less than of the body, and that we cannot expect a restoration from those evils without an intimate acquaintance with the state and tendencies of our intellectual powers, such an acquaintance becomes exceedingly desirable.

§. 8. *Is the gratification of a reasonable curiosity.*

There is a third recommendation of this study, which will apply to it in common with many others, viz. That it is the gratification of a very reasonable curiosity. The botanist examines the seed of a plant, and its mode of germination, the root and the qualities by which it is fitted to act as an organ of nutrition and support, the structure of the stem, the position of the branches, the form of the leaves, &c.—And it is considered in him a commendable pursuit, and suitable to the inquisitive turn of an intellectual being. Although the declaration of scripture be readily admitted, that the flowers of the field are clothed in brighter raiment than the robes of Solomon, it can never be doubted, that they are a subject of inquiry far inferior to the mind of man, for the same scriptures teach us, that it is for man, considered as an intellectual and immortal being, that all nature lives and blooms. If, therefore, he be worthily employed, who marks the progress of the acorn as it shoots up and spreads itself forth into the strength and fullness of the mountain oak ; how much more so is he, who observes the first thoughts of an infant and marks their subsequent history, till he sees them in the proud and overshadowing maturity of the demonstrations of Newton.

§. 9. *Is a help to those who have the charge of early education.*

This study, in the fourth place, furnishes many very valuable hints to those, who have the charge of early education. General experience evinces the truth of an intimation of Mr. Pope, that education gives a direction to the mental character in subsequent life much the same as the inclination of the tree follows the bent of the twig. Children and youth adopt almost implicitly the manners and opinions of those, under whom they happen in Providence to be placed or with whom they much associate, whether they be parents, instructors, or others.

Let it, therefore, be remembered, that passions both good and evil may then rise up and gain strength, which it

will afterwards be found difficult to subdue. Intellectual operations may at that period be guided and invigorated, which, if then neglected, can never be called forth to any effective purpose in after life. Habits and associations of various kinds may then be formed which will follow the subject of them down to the grave, being, as long as life lasts, beyond the power of all attempts at a removal of them.

What we learn from every day's observation agrees with what we are taught in the saying of Solomon ; "Train up a child in the way he should go, and when he is old, he will not depart from it."

It is, then, reasonably expected of parents and instructors, that they attempt to eradicate in the minds of the young bad passions and foster and sustain those, which are good ; that they pursue suitable methods for the invigoration of the mental powers, and that they strive to strengthen those habits and associations, which shall render them good members of a family, useful citizens in the commonwealth ; and above all should those under their care be trained up in the understanding and practice of that religion, which brings peace and hope.

No one certainly can be considered properly qualified for this great undertaking, who has not formed a systematick and philosophick acquaintance with the principles of the mind.

§. 10. *Instructs us not only as to our thoughts but language.*

It may not be out of place to remark here, that this science concerns not only the various forms of thought, but the nature of language also, which is the medium of communication, by which our thoughts are made known to others. Here then is another and fifth benefit, which may properly be set up against those objections, which have been made to this interesting department of science, since it is in a great measure by means of language, that different and distant minds hold intercourse, the forms of society are preserved, and



the great family of man are enabled to go forth in the path of social and civil melioration.

As words are in themselves mere arbitrary signs, and have no natural or inherent fitness for the expression of the signification, which is attached to them, more than various other signs, which might have been employed, they afford a fruitful subject of remark to the intellectual philosopher, who states the object for which they are used, explains their necessary imperfection, and teaches us in their skilful and appropriate application.

§. 11. *Has a connection with moral philosophy, &c.*

It is to be considered further, that this study has an intimate connection with others, which are of great importance; and this connection may be regarded as increasing the urgency of attending to it. It will perhaps be a more satisfactory illustration of this remark than any thing we can say ourselves, if we make a quotation here from Mr. Stewart's review of the philosophical works of Locke and Leibnitz.

"Although my design is to treat separately of metaphysics, ethicks, and politicks, it will be impossible to keep these sciences wholly unmixed in the course of my reflections. They all run into each other by insensible gradations; and they have all been happily united in the comprehensive speculations of some of the most distinguished writers of the eighteenth century. The connection between metaphysics and ethicks is more peculiarly close; the theory of morals having furnished, ever since the time of Cudworth, several of the most abstruse questions, which have been agitated concerning the general principles, both intellectual and active, of the human frame."

Especially, is the knowledge of the principles of Intellectual Philosophy connected with the various departments of criticism. We see not how a person can give any rational account of the effects of a work of imagination without such knowledge, or point out the excellencies and de-

fects of a painting, or sit in judgment upon any other work of art. For, whatever we perceive to be beautiful or sublime in such works, could never possess the qualities of beauty or sublimity independently of our mental frame, and we never apply those epithets to them, except it be with reference to certain principles within us.

But we leave these and all other considerations, tending to show the utility of this science, with a single reflection more, trusting, that it will be enough to justify us in our pursuits.

§. 12. *Teaches us to revere the wisdom of our Creator.*

We are taught by this science to revere the wisdom of our Creator.

We are frequently referred in theological writings to the works of creation, as a proof of his greatness and wisdom; and the remark has been made, not without reason, that the "*stars teach as well as shine.*" The discoveries of modern astronomy not only assure us, that there is a God, but impart this additional assurance, that he is above all others, to whom the attributes of divinity may have been at any time ascribed.

But it must be added, that of all things created, whether in the heavens above or in the earth beneath, the human mind is that principle, which evinces the most wonderful construction, which discloses the most astonishing movements. There is much to excite our admiration in the harmonious movements of the planetary orbs, in the rapidity of light, in the process of vegetation; but still greater cause for it in the principle of thought, in the inexpressible quickness of its operations, in the harmony of its laws, and in the greatness of its researches. How striking are the powers of that intellect, which, although it have a local habitation, is able to look out from the place of its immediate residence, to pursue its researches among those remote worlds, which journey in the vault of heaven, and to converse both with the ages past and to come.

It ought not to be expected that we should be intimate-

ly acquainted with a principle possessing such striking powers, without some reverential feelings towards him, who is the author of it.

§. 13. *Of the mental effort necessary in this study.*

This science demands great mental effort on the part of the student. This effort is of a peculiar kind. It consists essentially in a continued and unbroken fixedness of attention. Such an effort is painful to many, and perhaps this is one cause of the unfavourable reception, which this department of knowledge has often met with. But the advantages attending it are so numerous, it is to be hoped, they will overcome any disinclination to mental exertion. The fruits of the earth are purchased by the sweat of the brow, and it has never been ordered, that the reverse of this shall take place in the matters of knowledge, and that the fruits of science shall be reaped by the hands of idleness. No man has ever become learned without toil; and let it be remembered, if there be many obstacles in the acquisition of any particular science, that he, who overcomes a multiplication of difficulties, deserves greater honour than he, who contends only with a few,

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## CHAPTER SECOND.

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### PRIMARY TRUTHS.

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§. 14. *Introductory remarks on this subject.*

It is often highly important, in the investigations of a science, to state, at the commencement of such investigations, what things are to be considered as preliminary and taken for granted, and what are not. If this precaution had always been observed, which, where there is any room for mistake or misapprehension, seems so reasona-

ble, how many useless disputes would have been avoided; —the paths to knowledge would have been rendered more direct and easy, instead of being prolonged and perplexed. It is impossible to proceed with inquiries in the science of INTELLECTUAL PHILOSOPHY, as it will be found to be in almost every other, without a proper understanding of those fundamental principles, which are necessarily involved in what follows.

Those preliminary principles, which are necessary to be admitted, and without which we are unable to proceed with any satisfaction and profit in our inquiries, will be called, for the sake of distinction and convenience, **PRIMARY TRUTHS**.

There would seem to be no impropriety in calling them **TRUTHS**, since they are forced upon us, as it were, by our very constitution; all mankind admit them in practice, however they may affect to deny them with their lips; and they are as plain and incontrovertible at their very first enunciation, as any discoveries in physicks or any demonstrations in geometry. We call them **PRIMARY**, because they are the ultimate propositions, into which all reasoning resolves itself, and are necessarily involved and implied in all the investigations, which we shall make on the present subject.

The first of this class of truths, which will come under consideration, is this;

§. 15. *A belief in our personal existence.*

Des Cartes formed the singular resolution, not to believe his own existence, until he could prove it.

He reasoned thus; *Cogito, ergo sum*, I think, therefore, I exist. This argument, which he considered conclusive and incontrovertible, evidently involves what is termed a *petitio principii* or begging of the question.

It is easy to perceive, that the very thing to be proved is assumed. *Cogito* is equivalent to the proposition, *I am a thinking being*; and *ergo sum* may be literally interpreted, *therefore, I am in being*. His premises had already im-

plied, that he existed as a thinking being, and it is these very premises, which he employs in proof of his existence. The acuteness, which has generally been attributed to him, evidently failed him in this instance. The argument of Des Cartes was unsuccessful, and no one, who has attempted to prove the same point, has succeeded any better.

It is necessary to take different ground from that taken by this philosopher and his followers. We consider the belief of our existence a PRIMARY TRUTH. A few remarks may tend to show the propriety of thus doing.

There was a time when man did not exist. He had no form, no knowledge. Light, and motion, and matter were things, in which he had no concern. He was created from nothing with such powers and such laws to his powers, as his Creator saw fit to give.

We are called upon to mark the history of this new created being.

At one year of age, or, if it be preferred, before one half or quarter of that period is passed, we will suppose, that some object, external to himself, is, for the first time, presented to his senses. The consequence is, that there is an impression made on the senses, and a perception of the object, presented to them. But it is impossible for him, as I think every one will allow, to perceive the object without a simultaneous conviction of the existence of the percipient. Nothing can be heard, or seen, or touched without an attendant belief, that there is a being, who hears, and handles, and beholds. This is a conclusion, which is necessarily involved in our mental constitution and which, as it has such an origin, neither requires any argument nor fears any refutation.

Malebranche in his search after truth speaks much, if the expressions be admissible, in commendation of the spirit of doubting. But then he bestows this commendation with such limitations as will prevent those evils, which result from too freely giving up to a sceptical spirit.

"To doubt (says he) with judgment and reason, is not so small a thing as people imagine, for here it may be said,

that there's a great difference between doubting and doubting. We doubt through passion and brutality, through blindness and malice, and, lastly, through fancy, and only because we would doubt. But we doubt also with prudence and caution, with wisdom and penetration of mind. Academicks and atheists doubt upon the first grounds, true philosophers on the second. The first is a doubt of darkness, which does not conduct us into the light, but always removes us from it." (B. I. ch. 20.)

We may remark in view of these observations of Malebranche, that such is the doubting of those over-scrupulous inquirers, who demand proof of their own existence. Such scepticism as that is truly a doubt of darkness, which does not conduct us into the light, but always removes us from it.

A second of those truths, which we term PRIMARY, is this ;

§. 16. *A belief of our personal identity.*

The proof of our personal identity is sometimes referred to what is termed consciousness. We are said to be conscious of our identity. When these expressions are used, it is meant by them, that we have a conviction of the understanding, or we *know* ourselves to have enjoyed a continuance of being. If any thing more than this be intended, it will be found to be an use of terms without meaning.

We have employed the phrase, PERSONAL IDENTITY.

The words, *person* and *personal*, convey a complex idea. They have indeed particular reference to that indestructible principle, which we denominate the mind ; but they have reference to it, considered in its connection with the body.

By mental identity we have reference to the continuance and oneness of the thinking principle merely.

By bodily identity we mean the sameness of the bodily shape and general organization. We cannot attach any other meaning to the latter phrase in consequence of the constant changes in the material particles, which compose our systems.

In those apprehensions, however, which we attach to the phrase, **PERSONAL IDENTITY**, we have reference to both the one and the other, the mind and the body; and combine together the two ideas, which are conveyed in both the phrases before mentioned, viz. **mental identity** and **bodily identity**.

A belief in personal identity, or conviction that there has been a continuance of our being, is to be regarded, and with abundant reason, as a primary truth.

The mere fact, that it is implied in our reasonings from the past to the future, and universally in our daily actions, is of itself a sufficient ground for considering it as such, for reckoning it among the original and essential elements of the understanding.

The farmer, who now beholds his well cultivated fields, knows, that he is identically the same person, who twenty years before, entered the forest with an axe on his shoulder, and felled the first tree. The soldier, who recounts by his fireside to his children and grand children the battles of his youth, never once doubts, that he was himself the witness of those sanguinary scenes, which he delights to relate. It is alike useless to attempt to deny or to prove to them what they know, what they believe, not on evidence, but from nature; what they take for granted in their hopes, in their retrospections, in their conversation, in all their engagements.

Another view of the subject may perhaps make the ground, which has been taken, more clear and impressive.

No train of reasoning, (what may be termed an *argument*,) can be brought to bear against this sentiment, that a belief in our personal identity is to be regarded as a primary truth, an original principle of our constitution.

The truth of this remark will appear on examination.

There evidently can be no argument, properly so called, unless there be a succession of distinct propositions. From such a succession of propositions, no conclusion can be drawn by any one, unless he be willing to trust to the evidence of memory. But memory involves a notion of the

time past, and whoever admits, that he has the power of memory, in however small a degree, virtually admits, that he has existed identically the same at some former period, as at present.

The considerations, which we have in view and which are greatly worthy of attention in connection with the principle under examination, may with a little variation of terms be stated thus.

Remembrance, without the admission of our personal identity, is clearly an impossibility. But there can be no process of reasoning without memory. This is evident, because arguments are made up of propositions, which are successive to each other not only in order, but in point of time. It follows, then, that there can be no argument whatever, or on any subject, without the admission of our identity, as a point, from which to start. What then will it avail to attempt to reason either for or against the views, which are here maintained, since in every argument which is employed, there is necessarily an admission of the very thing, which is the subject of inquiry?

A third of those TRUTHS or fundamental propositions, which we term primary, may thus be stated;

§. 17. *The external, material world has an existence.*

The Pyrrhonick sect, so named from Pyrrho, its founder, a native of Elea, who flourished in the fourth century before Christ, called in question the truth of every system of opinions, adopted by other sects. Hence they have been also called scepticks and the sceptical sect; names, which, in consequence of holding every thing to be uncertain, they seem to have well merited. They denied among other things the existence of matter. Their reasonings in respect to the material world were such as the following.

FIRST; The organs of perception, said they, are different in different animals, and it is probable, that the same objects present different images or appearances to them. But one person evidently can have no reason for saying, that his perceptions are more agreeable to the real nature



of things than those of another person or of other animals.

**SECONDLY**; Different objects present a different aspect according to their position, their nearness, or distance, or the mode, in which they are exhibited to the senses; and no good reason can be given, why one of these aspects should agree with the real object any better than the rest of them.

For instance we see a high steeple behind a very large wall or a hill and it appears to be very near and of diminished size, but we afterwards see it with a number of houses and spaces both open and enclosed between; and the steeple, when seen under this difference of circumstances appears differently, seeming to be of a larger size and at a greater distance.

But who can tell, which is the true, the correct representation of the object?

The moon appears to be only a foot or two feet in diameter, when beheld by the naked eye, but the telescope gives a very different account of its dimensions.

In this way, say those, who profess to be genuine scepticks, we are constantly imposed upon, our senses always giving us false representations. We, consequently, know nothing concerning the true nature of material objects. What is termed matter is entirely incomprehensible, and it is altogether an useless undertaking, to attempt to prove the existence of any external substances.

It was said of Pyrrho, that he carried his principles so far as to be in danger of being run over by carriages or of tumbling from precipices. But as his doctrine always found enough disposed to ridicule it, these statements were probably the fabrication of his enemies.

Some have asserted, that the professions of the scepticks are a mere pretence; that they do not believe or rather disbelieve what they profess to; but concerning this it is not essential to inquire, since we have their own explicit account of their opinions, whether it be an account corresponding with the truth or not.

But this is enough to have said concerning the scepticks as a sect.

We should reckon ourselves to be but in a poor calling, if we were to stop, when so many important inquiries demand our attention, and argue at any length the point of the existence of a material world with any, who may be disposed to deny it.

Let them remember, we do not attempt to explain what the real nature of matter is ; but only assert, that it exists ; no otherwise than when we acknowledge our ignorance of the nature of the existence of God, while we believe, there is such a being.

If the advocates of the doubting philosophy are unable by the sense of sight to judge correctly of the size of a steeple, has not the Almighty furnished them with another sense, that of the touch, by which they can form a more correct estimation ?

If the eye of the body by itself alone be unable to give us a correct idea of the sun and moon, cannot the eye of the mind come in to its assistance ? Can it not tell us not only the size of those bodies but mark out the path of their motion, and thus not only seeing those things, which actually exist, but those, which are to be hereafter, predict their position and appearance before that position and those appearances happen ?

This also is to be considered.

These persons either deny or admit their own existence. If they deny it, then we have none to contend with. If they admit it, then it remains to be shown by them, how the declaration of Scripture, *that all flesh is grass*, does not hold true in respect to themselves, or that their bodies more truly exist now, than they will, when they shall have mingled with the dust, or have passed into other material shapes.

Furthermore, whatever may be the idea of scepticks on this point, the great mass of mankind believe in the existence of the Deity ; a being of perfect truth as well as benevolence. But to create man so that he should be irresistibly led to believe in the existence of a material world, when it did not exist, to create him with high capacities of thought, of feeling, and of action ; and then to

surround him with a panorama of illusive and imaginary appearances, would seem to be beneath both truth and goodness.

Admitting, therefore, the existence of the material world without further remarks on the subject, we come to a **FOURTH PRIMARY TRUTH**, which will be found to enter very extensively into all our investigations concerning the mind.

§. 18. *Confidence is to be reposed in the memory.*

When we say, that confidence is to be reposed in the memory, it is not meant to be asserted, that we are liable to no mistakes from that source. It is merely meant, that when we are satisfied, that our memory fully and correctly retains any perceptions of whatever kind of a former period, we receive such remembrances with as much confidence and act upon them as readily, as if the original perceptions were now present to the mind. Without this confidence in the memory we could hardly sustain an existence ; we certainly could not derive any thing in aid of that existence from the experience of the past.

Our past life has been a series of sensations or of different states of the mind, following each other in rapid and almost unbroken succession.

But if we are asked in what way we are able to connect the past states of the mind with the present, and to make our former sensations a part of the sum of our knowledge now ; all the answer, which can be given to these inquiries, is, that, in the original designation of those principles, which were selected for the composition of our intellectual being, we are so constituted as to place a perfect reliance on the reports of that mental operation, which we term the memory ; and this statement is equally satisfactory and the only satisfactory account, whether we consider the memory a simple or a complex exercise of the mind.

There is one more of those principles, which are justly considered primary and original, to be mentioned. It is this.

§. 19. *Man is so constituted, as to be susceptible of a variety of emotions.*

This characteristic in our constitution will be the better understood by being briefly illustrated.

We behold certain appearances in the external, material world ; for instance, a sloping hill, fields waving with verdure, with the accompaniments of brooks and forest. This combination of natural scenery is presented before the mind ; and this presentation of it to the intellectual principle is immediately succeeded by an **EMOTION OF BEAUTY**.

We are subsequently removed from this pleasing combination of natural scenery to the brow of some rugged precipice. Beneath us are giant oaks, which toss their hundred arms, and desert caves, from whose mysterious bosoms the hollow winds sigh responsive to the more awful voice of the torrent. When such a combination of the works of nature is held up to the soul's inspection, it is immediately followed, as in the case already mentioned, by an emotion ; and we term it, by way of distinction from other states of the mind, an **EMOTION OF SUBLIMITY**.

Other emotions are excited, when different combinations of natural objects are beheld, which will vary also with differences in the situation and circumstances of the beholder.

But this is a principle, which extends in its application not only to those inanimate works, by which we are surrounded, but to human actions also.

Any actions of our fellow beings, when beheld by us, are immediately connected in the mind with certain emotions, which exist in consequence of the previous existence of those actions. Those actions, which discover justice, beneficence, and propriety, are in general followed by pleasure and approbation. Other actions of an opposite character are attended with pain and disapprobation.

Hence it may be laid down as a principle of our mental constitution, that certain emotions follow the exhibition of objects or actions to the mind, much the same as vision follows the opening of the eyelids, or that sounds

will be produced, when the vibrations of the air reach the organ of hearing.

No reason whatever can be given, why any combination of objects or of actions, why any exhibition of purpose or of power, causes a new state of mind of that class termed emotions any more, than actions and objects, purposes and powers utterly unknown to us, except it be this, that a susceptibility of emotions is one of the constituent and original characteristic of the intellectual principle.

With these admitted principles in view, which seem to spring up before us from our very nature and to claim our undoubting assent, the philosophy of the mind at once assumes an interest, which it could not otherwise possess. It ceases, at least in a great measure, to be charged with that vagueness, and uncertainty, and spirit of trifling, which have hitherto been brought against it.

§. 20. *Admission of preliminary truths agreeable to right feelings towards the Supreme Being.*

When we consider, how short-sighted we are, it was to be expected, that we should find ourselves in the onset, under the necessity of taking certain principles for granted, as the conditions and auxiliaries of our subsequent inquiries.

If we are under the necessity of taking for granted these preliminary or primary truths, which have been mentioned, in all our investigations, which, we have seen to be the case, we may well say, that we find them agreeable to fact; and we ought, therefore, to find the fact accordant with our feelings, and not to complain of it.

Not to be satisfied with such views and such admissions, when we puzzle ourselves in vain to get rid of them, may justly be thought to indicate an unhappy perversity in the moral disposition, and is a sort of complaint against God himself. To undertake to explain every thing, independently of the creating power, and without a careful regard to those ultimate principles, which that creating power has ordained, betrays at least an ignorance of our limit-

ed ability, and, if it should not impeach one's piety, is an indication of weakness. If to know what our Creator has done be the part of philosophy, to acknowledge and revere him in his doings seems to be the part of religion ; and he, who is not in some degree possessed of the latter, wants that state of mind, which would be an essential aid to him in the investigations of the former. Since it is true, wherever we go, wherever we push our inquiries, whether in regard to mind or matter, we find, in the result of those inquiries, Him, who has given to us whatever capacity of knowledge we may possess, saying to men, as he does to the expanse of the ocean, "*there shall thy proud waves be stayd.*"

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## CHAPTER THIRD.

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### PERCEPTION.

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#### §. 21. *On classifications of our intellectual powers.*

It is a matter of convenience and helps to the more ready understanding and recollection of these subjects, to class together and to assign a name to certain intellectual operations or to combinations of them of the same kind. To certain operations of the mind of one sort we give the name, PERCEPTION ; while operations of another kind, differing from perception and also from each other, are designated by the terms, memory, imagination, &c.

But it is not necessary to our purpose to attempt any classification more general than this, what may be termed a partitioning of the states or affections of the mind, as, for instance, in the old division of the understanding and will.

The classification of certain operations of the same sort under the names, PERCEPTION, MEMORY, IMAGINATION, &c. is only a subordinate division ; one which, if it be not clearly made, is at least suggested, by nature ; and is very

different from that of assigning a distinctive, general name to a number of operations, essentially differing from each other, with the intention of having them considered an entirely separate fraternity. Some remarks further may be made to justify us in not attempting those more general classifications, which have been formerly proposed.

§. 22. *Of the classification into understanding and will.*

The operations of the mind have formerly been divided and classed under the two general names of the understanding and will.

Under the will seems to have been included that ability, in whatever way it might exhibit itself, which was supposed to be necessary in bringing the mental constitution to action; it was the mind's operative and controlling principle; something which moved and governed it. Agreeably, then, to this division, we find, on the one hand, the will, and, on the other, as its opposite, was the understanding. To determine, however, what operations belonged to the one and what belonged to the other, was by no means a matter well settled, but of great contention; and a zeal in this particular was exhibited similar to that, when rival powers strive for the annexation of a disputed province to their respective empires. But of what benefit was this general classification it is now difficult to say, and it has at last fallen into comparative discredit.

§. 23. *Of the classification into active and intellectual powers.*

Another general classification of the powers of the mind was this, into the intellectual and the active powers.

Under the intellectual, were comprehended perception, memory, judgment, reasoning, abstraction, &c.; under the active powers, volition, and a variety of emotions, such as pleasure, pain, aversion. This classification, excepting the difference of names, was very similar to the one above mentioned. But, very evidently, positive or active power must be implied in some of the operations termed intellectual,

as well as in those, to which the opposite designation is given. That state of the mind, which is termed abstraction, or imagination, is as positively active as that, which chooses, or loves, or hates.

Without, therefore, attempting a general classification of the mental powers, it will be sufficient to remark upon them separately, beginning with PERCEPTION.

And here it may be observed, that our principal object is to ascertain facts in regard to the mind; the arrangement of those facts and any speculations, which are not founded directly upon them, are points of subordinate consideration.

#### §. 24. *Of the objects of perception.*

All things, with which we become acquainted by means of the senses, are objects of perception. External nature, in particular, in all its varieties is submitted to our inspection; and whatever knowledge we are enabled to possess of it we enjoy by means of that mental operation. In all our knowledge then from this source, two things are to be taken for granted,

- (1) The existence of a material world,
- (2) Certain affections, caused in the organs of sense by external things.

Nor do we anticipate, after what has already been said on the subject of a material world, taken in connection with our consciousness of a susceptibility in our organs of sense of impressions from external objects, that any exception will be taken to these reasonable assumptions.

*Perception, then, or external sensation is a state or affection of the mind, which is immediately successive to certain affections of the organs of sense, these affections in the sensorial part being caused by external objects.*

The qualities or properties of the material world, which is the great object of our perceptions, are considered by Mr. Locke and others under the two heads of Primary and Secondary.



§. 25. *Of the primary qualities of bodies.*

The primary qualities of bodies are extension, figure, divisibility, and solidity. The name of secondary qualities has been given to sound, colour, taste, smell, heat, and cold.

Primary qualities are known by being essential to the existence of all bodies. All bodies have extension, all bodies have figure, all are capable of division, all are solid.

By solidity in bodies is to be understood that quality, by which a body hinders the approach of others, between which it is interposed. In this sense water and all other fluids are solid. If particles of water could be prevented from separating, it would be impossible for any two bodies, between which they might be, to come in contact. This was shown in an experiment, which was once made at Florence. A quantity of water was enclosed in a gold ball, which on the most violent pressure could not be made to fill the internal cavity, until the water inside was forced through the pores.

Divisibility is reckoned among the primary qualities of matter. The smallest particle is susceptible of division; and to that small particle must belong not only divisibility but the qualities of solidity, figure, and extension.

§. 26. *Of the sense of smell.*

The medium, through which we receive the sensations of smell, is the organ, which is termed the olfactory nerve, situated principally in the nostrils, but partly in some continuous cavities. When any odoriferous particles, sent from external objects, affect this organ, there is a certain state of mind produced, which varies with the nature of the odoriferous bodies. But we cannot infer from the sensation itself merely, that there exists any necessary connection between the smell and the external objects any more, than that there exists a connection between the motions of joy and sorrow and the same objects. It might indeed be suggested to us by the change in our mental states, that there must be some cause or antecedent to the change, but

this suggestion would be far from implying the necessity of a *corporeal* cause.

How then does it happen, that we are not merely sensible of the particular sensation, but refer it at once to some external object, to the rose, or the honeysuckle? In answer it may be remarked, if we had always been destitute of the senses of sight and touch, this reference never could have been made, but having been furnished with them by the beneficent author of our being, we make this reference by experience. When we have seen the rose, when we have been near to it and handled it, we have uniformly been conscious of that state of mind, which we term a sensation of smell. It is only when we have been in the field of honeysuckles or in its immediate neighbourhood, or when they have been gathered and presented to us, that we have been reminded of their fragrance. And thus, having learnt by experience, that the presence of the odorous body, is always attended with the sensations of smell, we form the habit of attributing the sensations to that body as their cause; and this mental reference is made with almost as much promptness, as if it were necessarily involved in the sensation or perception itself.

#### §. 27. *Of the sense of taste.*

A *sapid* body is applied to the organ of taste. The application of such body immediately causes a change or affection of the sensorial organ; and this is at once followed by a mental perception. Thus we have the perceptions, to which we give the names, sweet, bitter, sour, acrid, &c.

The perceptions of the mind are referred by us to something, external to itself, which we call bitter, sweet, &c. as their *cause*. This reference is made very rapidly, so that we at once say of one apple it is sweet, and of another, it is sour; but it will always be found to be subsequent, in point of time, to the perception. As in the case of smells, which have been already remarked upon, the reference is the result of our former experience. We say of one body, it is sweet, and of another, it is acrid, because we have ever

observed, that the mental states, indicated by those terms, have always existed in connection with the presence of those bodies.

Whenever, therefore, we say of any bodies, that they are sweet, bitter, acrid, or, apply any other epithets, expressive of sapid qualities, we mean to be understood to say, that such bodies are fitted in the constitution of things to cause in the mind the perceptions of sweetness, bitterness and acridness, or other sensations, expressed by denominations of taste. Or, in other words, that they are the established antecedents of such sensations, as there is, further than this, no necessary connection between them.

#### §. 28. *Of the sense of hearing and of sounds.*

Sounds, which we perceive by means of the sense of hearing, are caused by undulations of elastick air, set in motion by the sonorous body and striking on the tympanum of the ear.

Sounds differ, first, in the tone ; secondly, in the strength of the tone. It is remarked by Dr. Reid, that five hundred variations of tone may be perceived by the ear, also an equal number of variations in the strength of the tone ; making, by a combination of the tones and of the degrees of strength, twenty thousand simple sounds, differing either in tone or strength.

In a perfect tone a great many undulations of elastick air are required, which must be of equal duration and extent, and follow each other with perfect regularity. Each undulation is made up of the advance and retreat of innumerable particles of elastick air, whose motions are all uniform in direction, force, and time. Accordingly, there will be varieties in the same tone, arising from the position and manner of striking the sonorous body, from the constitution of the elastick medium, and from the state of the organ of hearing.

Different instruments, such as a flute, a violin, and a bass-viol may all sound the same tone, and yet be easily distinguishable. A considerable number of human voices

may sound the same note, and with equal strength, and yet there will be some difference. The same voice, while it maintains the proper distinctions of sound, may yet be varied many ways by sickness or health, youth or age, and other alterations in our bodily condition, to which we are incident.

§. 29. *Manner in which we learn the place of sounds.*

Previous to all experience, we should not know, whether a sound came from the right or left, from above or below, from a smaller or greater distance.

Dr. Reid mentions, that once, as he was lying abed, having been put into a fright, he heard his own heart beat. He took it to be some one knocking at the door, and arose, and opened the door oftener than once before he discovered, that the sound was in his own breast. Some traveller has related, that when he first heard the roaring of a lion in a desert wilderness, not seeing the animal, he did not know on what side to apprehend danger, as the sound seemed to him to proceed from the ground, and to enclose a circle, of which he and his companions stood in the centre.

It is by custom or experience, that we learn to distinguish the place of things, and, in some measure also, their nature, by means of their sound. It is thus that we learn, that one noise is in a contiguous room, that another is above our heads, and another in the street. And what seems to be an evidence of this is, that when we are in a strange place, after all our experience, we very frequently find ourselves mistaken in these respects.

If a man born deaf were suddenly made to hear, he would probably consider his first perceptions of sound as originating wholly within himself. But in process of time we learn not only to refer the origin of sounds to a position above or below, to the right or left; but to connect each particular sound with a particular external cause, referring one to a bell as its appropriate external cause, another to a flute, another to a trumpet.

### §. 30. *Connection of hearing with language.*

One of the greatest benefits of the sense of hearing is, that, in consequence of it, we are enabled to hold intercourse with each other by means of language, without which the advancement of the human mind must have inevitably been very limited.

It is by language, that we express our feelings to the little company of our neighbours and our own family; and without it this pleasant and cheering intercourse must be almost entirely suspended. Not limited in its beneficial results to families and neighbourhoods, it is the medium of the transmission of thought from age to age, from generation to generation. So that in one age is concentrated the result of all the researches, the combination of the wisdom of all the preceding.

\ "There is without all doubt," it has been observed, "a chain of the thoughts of human kind, from the origin of the world down to the moment at which we exist,—a chain not less universal than that of the generation of every being, that lives. Ages have exerted their influence on ages; nations on nations; truths on errors; errors on truths."

Whether language be an invention of man, or a power bestowed upon him by his Creator and coeval with the human race, the ear must in either case have been the primary recipient;—the faculty of speech so necessary and so beneficial could not have existed without the sense of hearing.

### §. 31. *Of the sense of touch.*

The principal organ of touch is the hand. This part of our frame is composed of various articulations, that by the aid of the muscles are easily moveable, so that it can adapt itself readily to the various changes of form in the objects, to which it is applied.

The senses, which have been already mentioned, are more simple and uniform in their results, than that of the touch. By the ear we have a perception of sounds or that

sensation, which we denominate hearing. By the palate we have a knowledge of tastes, and by the sense of smelling we become acquainted with the odours of bodies. The knowledge, which is directly acquired by all these senses, is limited to the qualities, which have been mentioned. By the sense of touch, on the contrary, we become acquainted not with one merely, but with a variety of qualities, such as the following, heat and cold, hardness and softness, roughness and smoothness, figure, solidity, motion, and extension.

Some might be inclined to say, that hardness and softness are expressive only of greater or less resistance, and are, therefore, the same thing, differing only in degree; but the consideration of these ideas separately does not properly come in here. In the remarks, which are hereafter to be made on the origin of knowledge, it will come within the plan of these Elements to bestow on some of them a more particular inquiry.

#### §. 32. *Of the benefits of the sense of sight.*

Of those instruments of perception, with which a benevolent Providence has furnished us, a high rank must be given to the sense of seeing. If we were restricted in the process of acquiring knowledge to the informations of the touch merely, how many embarrassments would attend our progress and how slow it would prove! Having never possessed sight, it would be many years, before the most acute and active person could form an idea of a mountain or even of a large edifice. But by the additional help of the sense of seeing, he not only observes the figure of large buildings, but is in a moment possessed of all the beauties of a wide and variegated landscape.

It does not fall within our plan to give a minute description of the eye, which belongs rather to the anatomist, but such a description, with a statement of the uses of the different parts of the organ, must be to a candid and reflecting mind a most powerful argument in proof of the existence and goodness of the Supreme Being. How won-

derful among other things is the adaptation of the rays of light to the eye ! If those minute particles, which come to us with such inconceivable rapidity from all things around us, were not coloured, we should be deprived of much of that high satisfaction, which we now take, in beholding surrounding objects ; and if they were not of a texture so extremely small, they would cause much pain to the organ of vision.

§. 33. *Statement of the mode or process in visual perception.*

In the process of vision, the rays of light, coming from various objects and in various directions, strike in the first place on the pellucid part of the ball of the eye.

If they were to continue passing on precisely in the same direction, they would produce merely one mingled and indistinct expanse of colour.

In the progress through the chrystalline humour, they are refracted or bent from their former direction and distributed to certain focal points, on the retina, which is a white, fibrous expansion of the optick nerve.

The rays of light, coming from objects in the field of vision, whether it be more or less extensive, as soon as they have been distributed on their distinct portions of the retina, and have formed an image there, are immediately followed by the sensation or perception, which is termed sight.

The image, which is pictured on the retina, is the last step, which we are able to designate in the material part of the process in visual perception ; the mental state follows, but it is not in our power to trace, even in the smallest degree, any physical connection between the optical image and the corresponding state of the mind.

All that we can say in this case is, that we suppose them to hold to each other the relation of antecedent and consequent by an ultimate law of our constitution.

NOTE. *On certain terms used as synonymous.*

The words, affection, idea, thought, sensation, operation, and perception are in common use indiscriminately applied to the mind, although some of them not exclusively so; and when thus applied, appear to be used as *synonymous*, and as signifying merely a state or position of the thinking principle. It seems, therefore, to be useless to set up an arbitrary distinction between them, which the common speech, both in conversation and in writing, will be continually annulling; and which distinction, in the present almost indiscriminate application of the words, might tend rather to perplex than aid us in our inquiries. Besides; nice inquiries into distinctions in the meaning of words belong rather to treatises purely philological than the present elementary work, which, taking language as it is, without pretending to define and settle its application, professes merely to collect for the use of the student, in a concise and plain view, some prominent facts in respect to the mind. Provided the facts are conveyed in an intelligible manner, so that the student can fully understand them, our object will be answered.

§. 34. *Of the connection which the brain has with perception.*

It was an odd opinion, which once widely prevailed, that our ideas are inscribed in marks or traces in the medullary substance of the brain. "So soon as the soul (says Malebranche in his *Search after Truth*) receives some new ideas, it imprints new traces in the brain, and so soon as the objects produce new traces, the soul receives new ideas."

This leads us to observe, without taking up time in remarking on this now exploded opinion, that the brain is a prominent organ in the material part of the process of sensation or of external perception. The sensorial substance, as it exists in the nerves, excepting the coat, in which it is enveloped, is the same as in the brain, being of the same



soft and partially fibrous texture and in perfect continuity with it. When the brain is in an unsound state, or has been in any way injured, both the external impression and the consequent perception are very imperfect. Also if the nerve, which is a supposed continuation of the brain, be injured, or if its continuity be disturbed by the pressure of a tight ligature, the effect is the same; both the external impression and the perception are either destroyed or are imperfect.

The brain, therefore, and the nerves in continuity with it constitute the *sensorial organ*, which in the subordinate organs of taste, of smell, of sight, of touch, and of hearing, presents itself under different modifications to external objects. On this organ, the *sensorial*, as thus explained, an impression must be made, before there can be perception.

An impression, for instance, is made on that part of the sensorial organ called the auditory nerve, and a state of mind immediately succeeds, which is termed the perception of sound.

An impression is made by the rays of light on that expansion of the optick nerve, which forms what is termed the *RETINA*, and the intellectual principle is immediately brought into that new position, which is termed visual perception.

The hand is impressed on a body of an uneven and rough surface, and immediately consequent on this impression, is that state of mind, which is termed a sensation or perception of roughness.

§. 35. *Impressions on the senses and perceptions are antecedents and consequents.*

In all these cases, as we have already remarked in respect to sight in particular, the impression made on the organ of sense is the antecedent, the mental perception is the consequent, and we are utterly unable, further than the mere fact of precedence and sequence, to trace any connection between them. But while we can see in instances of this description no necessary, no physical connection

between the perception of the mind and the impression on the senses, we clearly discover the agency of the Supreme Being, who has appointed and sustains this connection, which is in itself arbitrary and conventional.

We do indeed speak of cause and effect as if we could perceive how one follows another, but there is no other cause and effect in the physical world, than that of antecedent and consequent; and the instances, which we thus name, are to be resolved into the independent and uncontrolled power of God;—that Being, who, in the language of inspiration, “brings forth Mazzaroth in his season, and guides Arcturus with his sons.”

This discovery of the presence of the Almighty, to bind together and to give efficacy to things, which in themselves have no necessary connection, ought to be attended with a religious impression. ‘It ought, on the one hand, to remind us of our own limited powers, and, on the other, of the unsearchable knowledge, and power, and beneficence of our Creator. It was his hand, which (to use an illustration of Akenside) attuned the mind to the impressions of external things, so that it returns to them a corresponding note, like the image of Memnon, which was said in the fables of antiquity, whenever the morning sunbeams touched it, to pour forth its musick along the banks of the Nile.

#### §. 36. *Of the estimation of distances by sight.*

By the distance of objects, when we use the term in reference to ourselves, we mean the space, which is interposed between those objects and our own position. Blind men have a notion of distance and can measure it by touch or by walking forward, until they meet the distant object.

The perception of distance by the sight is an acquired and not an original perception.

All objects in the first instance appear to touch the eye.

Our experience has corrected so many of the representations of the senses before the period, which we are yet

able to retrace by the memory, that we cannot prove this by a reference to our own childhood and infancy. It appears, however, from the statement of the cases of persons born blind on the sudden restoration of their sight.

“When he first saw, (says Cheselden, the anatomist, when giving an account of a young man, whom he had restored to sight by couching for the cataract,) he was so far from making any judgment about distances, that he thought all objects touched his eyes, as he expressed it, as what he felt, did his skin; and thought no objects so agreeable as those, which were smooth and regular, although he could form no judgment of their shape, or guess what it was in any object, that was pleasing to him.”

This anatomist has further informed us, that he has brought to sight several others, who had no remembrance of ever having seen; and that they all gave the same account of their learning to see, as they called it, as the young man already mentioned, although not in so many particulars; and that they all had this in common, that having never had occasion to move their eyes, they knew not how to do it, and, at first, could not at all direct them to a particular object; but in time they acquired that faculty, though by slow degrees.

Blind persons, when at first restored to sight, are unable to estimate the distance of objects by that sense, but soon observing, that certain changes in the visible appearance of bodies always accompany a change of distance, they fall upon a method of estimating distances by the visible appearance. And it would no doubt be found, if it could be particularly examined into, that all mankind come to possess the power of estimating the distances of objects by sight in the same way. When a body is removed from us and placed at a considerable distance, it becomes smaller in its visible appearance, its colours are less lively, and its outlines less distinct; and we may expect to find a number of intermediate objects, more or fewer, as the distance may happen to be, showing themselves between the receding object and the spectator. And hence it is, that a certain

visible appearance comes to be the sign of a certain distance.

Historical and landscape painters are enabled to turn these facts to great account in their delineations. By means of dimness of colour, indistinctness of outline, and the partial interposition of other objects, they are enabled apparently to throw back at a very considerable distance from the eye those objects, which they wish to appear remote. While other objects, that are intended to appear near, are painted vivid in colour, large in size, distinct in outline, and separated from the eye of the spectator by few or no intermediate objects.

### §. 37. *Further illustrations of this subject.*

A vessel seen at sea by one, who is not accustomed to the ocean, appears much nearer, than it actually is. In his previous observations of objects at a distance he has commonly noticed a number of intermediate objects, interposed between the distant body and himself. The absence of those intermediate objects causes the deception, under which he labours in the present instance; or is, at least, a *prominent* cause of his erroneous supposition, that the vessel is nearer than it truly is.

For the same reason people misjudge of the width of a river, estimating its width at a half or three quarters of a mile at the most, when it is perhaps not less than double that distance.

The same in estimating by the eye the width and length of plains and marshes.

We mistake in the same way also in estimating the height of steeples and other similar elevated bodies. As the upper parts of the steeple out-top the surrounding buildings and there are no contiguous objects with which to compare it, any measurement taken by the eye must be inaccurate, but is generally less than the truth.

A man on the top of a steeple seems smaller to those below, than the same man would seem to the same persons, and at the same distance on level ground. As we have

been in the habit of measuring distances on the ground by the eye, we can give a pretty near guess, whether a person be at an hundred feet distance, or more or less; and the mind immediately makes an allowance and corrects, so rapidly that we do not remember it, the first visual representation. But having never been in the habit of measuring perpendicular distances, the mind is at a loss, and fails to make that correction, which it would very readily, and, as it were, intuitively make in the case of any objects on level ground. So that a man an hundred feet in the air appears to us smaller, than at the same removal from us on the earth.

The fixed stars when viewed by the eye, all appear to be alike indefinitely and equally distant. Being scattered over the whole sky, they make every part of it seem like themselves at an indefinite and equal distance, and, therefore, give the whole sky the appearance of the inside of a sphere. Moreover, the horizon seems to the eye to be further off than the zenith; because between us and the former there lie many things, as fields, hills, waters, which we know to occupy a great space; whereas between us and the zenith there are no considerable things of known dimensions. And, therefore, the heavens appear like the segment of a sphere, and less than a hemisphere, in the centre of which we seem to stand. And the wider our prospect is, the greater will the sphere appear to be and the less the segment..

In connection with what has been said we are led to make this further remark, that a change in the purity of the air will perplex in some measure those ideas of distance, which we receive from sight. Bishop Berkely remarks while travelling in Italy and Sicily, he noticed, that cities and palaces, seen at a great distance, appeared nearer to him by several miles than they actually were. The cause of this he very correctly supposed to be the purity of the Italian and Sicilian air, which gave to objects at a distance a degree of brightness and distinctness, which in the less clear and pure atmosphere of his native country, could be

observed only in those towns and separate edifices, which were near. At home he had learnt to estimate the distance of objects by their appearance ; but his conclusions failed him, when they came to be applied to objects in countries, where the air was so much clearer.

§. 38. *Idea of extension not originally from sight.*

We have seen, that our idea of distance is not derived originally from the sight, but from the touch. Our idea of extension has the same origin ; for, as distance is the space interposed between one object and another, extension is the distance between the parts of the same object where in the intermediate parts there is a continuity of the same substance.

If a man, endued with sight, were to be fixed all his days in one place immoveably, and were deprived of the means of gaining any experience by the touch, that man could never, from the information of his own senses, receive any accurate knowledge of extension. But having learnt in time what appearance coloured and extended bodies make to the eye, he comes to learn from that appearance the extension of bodies, much the same as he estimates their distance from their appearance.

And this statement leads us to the consideration of *magnitude* or limited extension, which is also estimated by the eye, although the power of thus measuring it, like that of measuring distances and extension, is not an original perception, but is acquired by the aid of the touch.

§. 39. *Measurements of magnitude by the eye.*

Magnitude is divided into two kinds, tangible and visible ; the tangible magnitude being always the same, but the visible, varying with the distance of the object. A man of six feet stature is always that height, whether he be a mile distant, or half a mile, or near at hand ; the change of place making no change in his real or tangible magnitude. But the visible magnitude of this man may be six feet or not one foot, as we view him present with us, or at two

miles distance; for his magnitude appears to our eye greater or less, according as he is more or less removed.

Of two objects equally distant or supposed to be equally distant, that, which has the greatest visible magnitude, is supposed to have the greatest tangible magnitude.

To a man bewildered in a mist, objects seem larger than the life, because their faint appearance conveys the idea of great distance, and an object at a considerable distance, which has the same visible magnitude with one near, the mind immediately concludes to be larger.

The sun and moon seem larger in the horizon than in the meridian, appearing then to be at the greatest distance, either because the horizon for a reason already given seems more remote than the zenith, or because the atmosphere, being more full of vapour towards the horizon, makes the heavenly bodies appear fainter, and consequently more distant.

§. 40. *Of the knowledge of the figure of bodies by the sight.*

A solid body presents to the eye nothing but a certain disposition of colours and light. We may imagine ourselves to see the prominencies or cavities in such bodies, when in truth we see only the light or the shade, occasioned by them. This light and shade, however, we learn by experience to consider as the sign of a certain, solid figure.

A proof of the truth of this statement is, that a painter by carefully imitating the distribution of light and shade, which he sees in objects, will make his work very naturally and exactly represent, not only the general outline of a body, but its prominencies, depressions, and other irregularities. And yet his delineation, which by the distribution of light and shade gives such various representations, is on a smooth and plain surface.

It was a problem submitted by Mr. Molyneux to Mr. Locke, whether a blind man, who has learnt the difference between a cube and a sphere by the touch, can, on being suddenly restored to sight, distinguish between them, and

tell, which is the sphere and which is the cube, by the aid of what may be called his *new* sense merely? And the answer of Mr. Locke is, that he cannot. The blind man knows what impressions the cube and sphere make on the organ of *touch* and by that sense is able to distinguish between them, but, as he is ignorant what impression they will make on the organ of *sight*, he is not able by the latter sense alone to tell, which is the round body, and which is the cubick.

It was remarked, that solid bodies present to the eye nothing but a certain disposition of light and colours.

It seems to follow from this, that the first idea, which will be conveyed to the mind on seeing a globe, will be that of a circle, variously shadowed with different degrees of light. This imperfect idea is corrected in this way. Combining the suggestions of the sense of touch with those of sight, we learn by greater experience what kind of appearance solid, convex bodies will make to us. That appearance becomes to the mind the sign of the presence of a globe; so that we have an idea of a round body by a very rapid mental correction, whereas the idea first conveyed to the mind is truly that of a plane, circular surface, on which there is a variety in the dispositions of light and shade. It is an evidence of the correctness of this statement, that in paintings plane surfaces, variously shaded, represent convex bodies, and with great truth and exactness.

It appears then, that distance, extension, magnitude, and figure, are originally perceived, not by sight, but by touch. We do not judge of them by sight, until we have learnt by our experience, that certain visible appearances always accompany and signify certain distances, extensions, magnitudes, and figures. This knowledge we acquire at a very early period in life, so much so, that we lose in a great measure the memory both of its commencement and progress.

And yet many people can recollect the time, when they considered the sky to be a transparent and solid concave,



resting on the tops of distant mountains. How different is this idea, which we receive from the sight, from what we find in our subsequent experience to be the fact!

§. 41. *The senses reciprocally assist each other.*

The errors and deficiencies of one sense are made up and corrected by the friendly presence and suggestions of another. And when any of the senses entirely fail, the others are proportionably quickened and improved.

A multitude of instances go to show to what extent this correction and this aid take place.

We will suppose, as an illustration, that, at an early period of life, a person loses his sight. An effect on the sense of hearing and of touch is immediately perceived; they are greatly improved.

The blind man cannot see his friend, but he knows, when he enters the room by the sound of his tread. He cannot see the large and heavy bodies, which happen in his way when he walks about, but he suspects their too great nearness to him in consequence of the increased resistance of the atmosphere.\* And a blind person, owing to the increased accuracy of the remaining senses, would be better trusted to go through the various apartments of a house, in the darkness of midnight, than one, possessed of

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\* It is a singular circumstance, that something similar to what is here stated of the ability of blindmen to discover the nearness or distance of objects by changes in the resistance of the atmosphere, has been noticed by the naturalist, Spallanzani, in respect to bats. He discovered, that bats when perfectly blinded and afterwards set at liberty, had the extraordinary faculty of guiding themselves through the most complicated windings of subterraneous passages, without striking against the walls, and that they avoided with great skill cords, branches of trees, and other obstacles, placed by design in their way.

This ability is probably owing to an extreme delicacy in the wing, which is of a very large size in proportion to that of the animal, and is covered with an exceedingly fine net-work of nerves. The bat, as it strikes the air with its wing, receives sensations of heat, cold, and resistance, and, in consequence, is enabled to avoid objects, which would otherwise obstruct its flight, apparently in the same way that blind persons perceive a door or a wall by a change in the temperature or in the resistance of the air.

the sense of seeing, but without any artificial light to assist him. It is stated on the authority of a Roman historian, that there was a blind man, who made it his employment to conduct merchants and other travellers through the sands and deserts of Arabia. This statement seems not to be improbable, when we recollect what is related in the transactions of the Manchester Society in England of John Metcalf, otherwise called Blind Jack. He became blind at an early period; but, notwithstanding, followed the profession of a waggoner and occasionally of a guide in intricate roads, during the night, or when the tracks were covered with snow. At length he became a projector and surveyor of highways in difficult and mountainous districts; an employment, for which one would naturally suppose a blind man to be but indifferently qualified. But, he was found to answer all the expectations of his employers, and most of the roads over the peak in Derbyshire in England were altered by his directions. Says the person, who gives this account of Blind Jack, "I have several times met this man with the assistance only of a long staff traversing the roads, ascending precipices, exploring vallies, and investigating their several extents, forms, and situations, so as to answer his designs in the best manner." (Ed. Ency. Art. Blindness.)

This improvement of the remaining senses, when one of them is lost, is probably owing to the increased attention, which people then bestow upon the various and nicely distinguished suggestions, which they furnish. Nothing escapes them, and those dim perceptions, which were formerly almost unnoticed, now convey to them important information.

§. 42. *Remarks on certain writers on our visual perceptions.*

It is proper to premise, before speaking of writers on the subject of our visual perceptions, that whatever remarks we may at any time make of a critical and historical nature

will in general be brief; our object being chiefly to let the student know, to whom he is indebted for new views in this science, and to offer what assistance we may be able to, in helping him to a selection of those books on the mind, which are most worthy of his attention.

It does not appear, that there were just and well settled views on the subject of our visual perceptions before the time of Dr. Barrow, who flourished about the middle of the seventeenth century, well known for his theological, and especially for his mathematical writings. We do not, however, mention his name, because he was in any great degree a contributor to the philosophy of the mind, although he has some merit in this respect; but from the circumstance that, in the conclusion of his Optical Lectures, he alludes to the subject of our visual perceptions in such a way as to let us know what perplexity rested upon it so late as at that period.

There are some facts in relation to the perception of the distance of external objects, which he acknowledges are involved in the mysteries of nature, and will probably not be discovered, until the manner of vision shall be more perfectly known. He says, he, therefore, leaves the knot untied.

At a later period, Mr. Molyneux and Mr. Locke evidently had views on this subject closely approximating to what is now considered the true explanation of these phenomena, as may be inferred in particular from some remarks concerning them, which are made in the second Book of the Essay on the Understanding.

But it is only justice to a learned and ingenious man to remark here, that the statement of our visual perceptions, as above given in the sections on that subject, was first fully proposed and established by Dr. Berkeley, bishop of Cloyne. Notwithstanding the great deduction, which he has incurred, in consequence of his peculiar views in respect to the existence of a material world, his writings, it must be confessed, exhibit much acuteness of thought, and what is no small merit, are written in a

simple and perspicuous style, well adapted to philosophical subjects.

Dr. Beattie, in a note to the chapter, where he treats of imagination, gives a concise and plain view of the principles developed and proved by Berkeley in his *New Theory of Vision*, with a variety of illustrations. In inquiries yet to be made, as in some of the statements in the preceding sections on perceptions by means of sight, we shall not unfrequently be indebted to his writings. They do not discover the originality and acuteness of Locke or even of Berkeley, but are exceedingly more valuable than a variety of other productions of a more scholastick nature, which might be mentioned; and may profitably be put into the hands of inquirers into the principles of mind and of morals.

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## CHAPTER FOURTH.

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### NO INNATE KNOWLEDGE.

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#### §. 43. *Innate ideas before the time of Mr. Locke.*

THE publication of Mr. Locke's *Essay on the Human Understanding*, has justly been considered as fixing an era in the science of Intellectual Philosophy. Before the publication of this work, which was in the year 1690, the doctrine of innate or connatural ideas was widely prevalent. By the phrase innate, or, to use an expression less ambiguous, connatural ideas, is to be understood certain ideas and propositions, which were held to be wrought into their intellectual nature and to be born with all mankind. It was maintained, that they were limited to no one class, neither to the rich nor the poor, neither to the learned nor the ignorant, to no clime and to no country, but all participated in them alike. These propositions and ideas, being coetaneous with the existence of the soul and being there

established at the commencement of its existence by the ordinance of the Deity, were regarded as the first principles of knowledge, and as the rules, by which men were to be guided in all their reasonings about natural and moral subjects. From these innate and original propositions the following may be selected as specimens of the whole.

§. 44. *Enumeration of innate principles.*

(1) Of the natural kind,

Viz., The whole is greater than a part; Whatsoever is, is; It is impossible for the same thing to be and not to be at the same time and in the same sense.

(2) Of the moral kind,

Viz., Parents must be honoured; Injury must not be done; Contracts should be fulfilled, &c.

(3) Of the religious kind,

Viz., There is a God; God is to be worshipped; God will approve virtue and punish vice.

If these propositions are innate or connatural with the mind, then the ideas, of which they are composed, must be innate; so that, whatever the number of propositions, there will be a yet greater number of innate ideas.

The doctrine of the existence of such innate ideas and propositions was supported by Des Cartes and Malebranche, names of such celebrity as to give at least a temporary currency to almost any opinion. The principal argument in support of this doctrine seems to have been this;

§. 45. *Argument on the subject of innate knowledge.*

All mankind universally exhibit an acquaintance with, and give their assent to ideas and propositions of this description; hence they are innate.

This argument is considered inconclusive, because the statement, which is made in it, is maintained to be untrue. It is undoubtedly the fact, that a part of the human race remain ignorant through life of the greater number, if not all of the propositions in question.

But admitting that all men are acquainted with them

and assent to them, this by no means proves them innate, so long as we can account for this acquaintance and this assent in some other way. It is admitted by all, that the mind exists, and that it possesses the power or the ability to acquire knowledge. If, therefore, in the exercise of this ability, which all admit it to have, we can come to the knowledge of what are called innate or connatural ideas and propositions, it is quite unphilosophical to assign to them another origin, in support of which no positive proof can be brought.

Further; if the doctrine of innate knowledge be admitted, ideas and propositions of this kind may be multiplied to any extent; every one will imagine himself at liberty to add to the number; they will unnecessarily be brought forward on a variety of occasions, and a most perplexing hindrance be thrown in the way of free inquiry and of the progress of knowledge.

§. 46. *Mr. Locke's opinions on this subject.*

Mr. Locke in the first book of his Essay on the Human Understanding has examined this subject at very considerable length. It has indeed been said of his argument, that it is both too long and not always sufficiently to the point, but it makes up in the variety and weight of its considerations what it wants in exactness of arrangement; and it will be found by no means easy to confute it.

It is one among the merits of this writer, that he has successfully laboured to do away many of our ancient prejudices, (what may be termed the rubbish of the science,) and shown us where to make a good and satisfactory beginning. In accordance with what there is so much evidence to consider the true doctrine, we are presented in his writings with the mind, not as a mere recipient, already in a good degree filled up with articles of knowledge, but as a principle or power of action; and all we have to do, is, to mark its operations, as they necessarily exist in consequence of its being furnished with the aid of the senses and surrounded with material objects. It knows nothing at the first; but it

possesses the ability to explore the forms of matter in its various shapes, to mark the aspects and the operations of intellect; and in this way it becomes possessed of a great variety of information. It is, therefore, a most wonderful principle, and, as it raises us far above the brute creation, it would for its own nobleness be highly worthy of the student's attention, even if no practical benefit should result from the pursuit.

§. 47. *Opinions of Plato and Aristotle.*

It may properly enough be remarked here, that the discussion on the subject of innate ideas and propositions is one of long standing. We refer in this remark to the statement, which a French writer, De Gerando, in his *History of Philosophy*, has given of the conflicting opinions of Plato and Aristotle, taking the translation of the passage, as we find it in an American periodical publication of merited reputation. "Ideas, (says Plato,) are not made up of deductions from experience. They have a different origin. It would be impossible to explain the production of them, if they were not independent of experience, and, consequently, innate, that is, placed in the mind by God himself, to serve as the elements of knowledge. Before they were communicated to us, they dwelt in the Divine mind, as so many forms or models, according to which the Deity arranged the universe."

The following is the reply of Aristotle.

"If ideas are innate (he says) how happens it, that we are not always conscious of them? And that it is so long before we obtain the knowledge, which they ought to impart to us? How can we have an idea of a thing, which we never perceived? To call our ideas models, on which existing objects were formed, is merely a poetical figure.

Who is there, that acts with his eyes fixed on these supposed models? We know, that objects may exist, may be made without reference to them."

"Plato was, therefore, (he says,) clearly in an error.

His *ideas* are evidently a product of the understanding, formed by a generalization of the particular qualities of individual objects."

It is this very question, namely, whether we have any ideas, any thing, which can be called knowledge previous to sensation, which divided different writers so late as the time of Des Cartes, who appears to have adopted sentiments, similar to those of Plato. It was this question, therefore, which Mr. Locke thought it necessary to examine at the commencement of his metaphysical writings, and with what ability is generally known.

§. 48. *Prevailing opinions at the present time.*

It would seem then from the remarks, which have been made, that in former times there has been a great diversity of opinion on the subject of the origin of our knowledge.

This diversity of opinion does not exist in so great a degree at present. Few are found, who hold to the doctrine of innate or connatural ideas and propositions, as that doctrine was formerly stated and maintained. The opinions of Mr. Locke on this subject, adopted with some slight modifications, are the opinions of nearly all mental philosophers, not only in America and England, but in France, and on the continent of Europe generally.

In the statements, which are to be made respecting the origin and combinations of our ideas, we have, accordingly, followed in his footsteps with such deviations, as might be expected from more recent, and, in some cases, more accurate and satisfactory inquiries.



## CHAPTER FIFTH.

### ORIGIN OF SIMPLE IDEAS.

§. 49. *Simple ideas received by means of the senses and from our mental operations.*

There is one class of our thoughts, which we term simple ideas, and with sufficiently good reason, since we know not, that they are in any degree compounded by being made up of other thoughts, or that they can be resolved into any thing more elementary. This class then naturally arrests our attention first.

When we look at the history of our simple ideas, with the intention of discovering, if possible, their true origin, we find, that they may be traced to two sources.

(1) Some of them originate in the senses, that is to say, are caused by means of external objects producing an affection of the senses.

(2) Other simple ideas arise to us or exist from reflecting on our mental operations.

In other words, the two predominant sources of our simple ideas are the world without and the world within; the external creation, between which and our bodily senses, Providence has instituted a common and reciprocal adaptation, and the internal, mental creation, which no sooner commences its various and appropriate exercises, than we are furnished with another series of simple ideas, which never could have been received from the senses alone.

These two sources of our simple thoughts, however they may have been by some writers confounded with each other, are entirely distinct; since the simple ideas, arising from the fact of the existence of certain mental operations, could not have been suggested by any thing, which takes place in the external world, independently of those opera-

tions. And this circumstance of itself sufficiently justifies the distinction, which has been set up between them.

There is, nevertheless, reason for saying, that those ideas, which are received from the senses, have the priority in point of time ; a fact, which it may be necessary briefly to illustrate.

As we know, that the human mind is not eternal, it is only to state the same thing in other words, when we say, that there must have been some particular period, when it commenced its existence or was created. If its acts or operations were not connatural and innate, of which, as appeared in the preceding chapter, there is by no means sufficient evidence, they must clearly have been subsequent in time to its creation. But while there is ground for saying, that our mental operations are subsequent to the creation of the thinking principle, the facts, which constantly present themselves to every one's attention, lead us to say further, that they are subsequent also to certain affections of the senses.

In other words, were it not for impressions on the senses, which may be traced to objects external to the senses, our mental capabilities, whatever they may be, would always have remained in a state of fruitless inaction.

Hence the process, which is implied in the perception of external things, or what is commonly termed by Mr. Locke *sensation*, may justly be considered the occasion or introductory step to all our knowledge.

But, although the presentation of external objects be the first occasion of the mind's becoming operative, it no sooner becomes such, than these operations furnish us with another set of ideas, as already remarked, which, by way of distinguishing them from those received through the direct mediation of the senses, may be termed ideas of *reflection*.

These two classes, then, simple ideas from the senses, and simple ideas from reflection, are the earliest, with which the mind is furnished, and are the elements or simplest materials of all our subsequent, intellectual attainments.

§. 50. *Of verbal explanations of simple ideas.*

In the remaining remarks on the subject now under consideration, it is necessary to warn the reader, that we shall, for the most part, merely state something of the mode or rather of the circumstances, in which this class of our thoughts occur to the mind, without pretending to be more explicit. Simple ideas admit of no definition, of no explanation, further than such statement of the circumstances, in which they are brought to view.

If any one should charge us with want of clearness and profess not to understand what is meant by the terms, extension, solidity, heat, cold, red, blue, sweet, unity, or other names of simple ideas, we know not that any thing can be done to clear up that mental obscurity, under which he labours, but merely to refer him to his own senses, to his personal experience, as the only instructor, from whom he will be likely to receive any tolerable satisfaction.

The subject of definitions, both in its connection with simple and with complex terms, will be further considered in the chapter on Language.

§. 51. *Division of our simple ideas.*

Mr. Locke, having reference to the mode, in which our simple ideas are received into the mind, has divided them into four classes;

- (1) Those, which are received by one sense merely;
- (2) Those, which are received from more than one sense;
- (3) Those, which are received from reflection or the observation of what takes place in our minds;
- (4) Those, which are received by reflection, and come into the mind also at other times, in various ways, by the senses; or which in some instances are received by sensation and reflection combined, and not separately, as in the simple idea of power.

And this seems to be the most natural division, which can be made, and, therefore, very well fitted to help us keep in memory the history of our early notions.

§. 52. *Of simple ideas from one sense only.*

To the class of simple ideas received from one sense only, belong the varieties of colour, such as red, white, yellow, green, &c., which are received by the sense of sight. To this class also belong all the varieties of sound, which are received by the sense of hearing; also the diversities of taste, received from the sense of taste.

The ideas of the sense of hearing do not belong to the sense of sight, nor those of sight to the sense of hearing; and this is so obvious, that it is needless to attempt to prove, how clearly the origin of the one is distinguished from that of the other set of ideas.

It may be remarked here, that not all our simple ideas have names. Only the prominent distinctions are thus marked, while there are many diversities in the sensations of touch, taste, vision, and, of the other senses, which are not.

§. 53. *Of simple ideas from more than one sense.*

There are other simple ideas, which we derive from more than one sense, such as figure, extension, motion. We perceive the extension of a body originally by means of the touch, but subsequently, when experience has given to the sense of sight its full power, are informed of it by the sight also.

The same of figure and motion.

As soon as we have learnt what significancy to attach to our visual perceptions, a subject, which was remarked upon in the third chapter, we have an idea of a statue by the sight and at once perceive, that it possesses form or figure; but the blind man, who has not the power of seeing, learns its figure no less accurately by the sense of touch merely.

When a solid body is moving with any considerable degree of rapidity from under our hands, such is the nature of the sensation produced, that we are immediately satisfied, that this body is changing its position. And we are equally satisfied of this, whether our eyes be open or shut.

In another case, for instance, when we see a boat putting off from a ship, we perceive the change of position or motion exclusively by the sight, the sense of touch being unaffected.

§. 54. *Of simple ideas from reflection.*

By the term, reflection, seems to be properly understood the observation of the operations of our own minds, as they are employed about the ideas, which they have gotten. Some of the simple ideas, which we receive from this source, are these, thinking, doubting, believing, judging, assenting.

When a proposition is stated with little or no evidence attending it, the mind, in reference to that proposition, is put into a position, to which we give the name of *doubting*. But if the evidence be considerably increased, the mental estimation, which we form, is altered in regard to it, and to this new state of the mind we give the name of *belief* or *believing*. The origin of other ideas of this class is similar, being the result of the observation of different states or operations of the thinking principle within us. They are rightly classed as simple ideas, since they are merely simple perceptions, and are no more compounded and can be no more resolved into any subordinate elements, than our perceptions of colour or taste.

§. 55. *Simple ideas from both of the above mentioned sources.*

There are certain simple ideas, which are received both by reflection and also by means of the senses; and such are the ideas of existence, succession, unity, and power. This will be the more clear from a few remarks, which remain to be made on each of them separately.

§. 56. *Of existence, unity, and succession.*

EXISTENCE is one of the ideas of this class. It is out of our power to define this idea, as it is all other simple ideas,

but it is clearly suggested to us by every external object, which we behold. Our minds also can never have ideas, or, what seems to be the same thing, be in successive states, without an attendant impression, that those ideas or mental states actually and truly exist.

The idea, expressed by the word *UNITY*, is suggested by whatever, whether internal or external, can be considered as one, and can be regarded as distinct and separate from any other object, about which the mind is employed. Hence, as ideas may be regarded in this way as well as outward objects, *UNITY* is properly considered one of those notions, which may be referred both to the senses and to reflection, and is conveyed into the mind from those sources in a variety of ways.

*SUCCESSION* is another idea, belonging to this class. Our ideas, while we are awake, are constantly going in a train, one coming and another departing. In this way, having this regular appearance and disappearance of thought forced upon our attention, we receive the idea of succession; and also by observing what takes place in external objects, such as the removal of bodies and the supply of their place by others, the changes of day and night, &c.

§. 57. *Origin of our idea of power.*

The idea of power, like those of existence, unity, and succession, is sometimes suggested to us from the senses, or what takes place in the external world, and sometimes from our mental operations or rather from the effects, which we observe to follow certain mental acts.

We find, by way of illustrating our meaning, that we are able by a mere volition to move several parts of our bodies, to go from place to place, and to do other things similar. We observe also, that physical bodies, external to ourselves, are able to cause certain effects, one on another, and hence there is suggested to us this idea.

But to be more explicit and to illustrate this statement by some instances, let it be observed, that the idea of power connects itself closely with cases of cause and effect,

and we become furnished with this idea by consulting such instances, whether they involve both mind and matter, or only material existences.

A cause is that, which immediately and always, in similar circumstances, is followed by a certain change; the change being the sequence or effect.

For example, fire and the melting of metals may be considered as standing to each other in the relation of cause and effect, or of antecedence and sequence; but although it be admitted to be true, that we know nothing more than the mere fact, that one precedes and the other follows, yet we at once and as it were of necessity have the idea of power.

Again, we learn, that the loadstone has the quality of drawing iron, but all we can properly understand from this statement, is, that when the loadstone is made to approach the iron, the iron moves; still we leave it to any one to say, whether we have not the idea of power. It is the same in other cases, where material bodies placed in certain circumstances are constantly followed by changes in other bodies; we associate with all such instances the idea of power.

But let us in particular reflect a moment on those instances, where the antecedent to the effect produced, is mind, is some intellectual operation or existence.

We exercise that desire or choice, to which we give the name of volition, and, immediately consequent on that volition, there is a motion of the hand.

In the beginning the world was in darkness; God said, Let there be light, and light was.

The Saviour said, Lazarus, come forth, and he arose from the dead.

In these cases we have the antecedent and consequent, the volition and the effect.

It seems to us very clear, that, in all cases when such antecedents and sequences are placed before the mind, especially when the antecedent, as in the cases last mentioned, is intellectual and intelligent, we immediately have

the idea of power, the same as when bodies of a certain colour, are placed before us, and we have the idea of whiteness or redness.

But we are perhaps called upon to give a definition or explanation of power. The reply is, that power is a simple and uncompounded perception. In all cases of invariable and immediate antecedence and sequence, it at once and necessarily arises in the soul. In such cases as when God said, Let there be light and light was; it is an idea, vivid and overwhelming.

Introduced, therefore, into the mind under such circumstances, and being a simple idea, which can be resolved into no subordinate elements, we could give no definition of it, if we desired to; and to insist on a definition, where the idea is so obviously of such a character, seems to have no more reason in it, than to demand a verbal definition of the simple perceptions of taste, of hearing, and of sight.

§. 58. *Of the evidence in favour of this account of the origin of our ideas.*

It was remarked in a preceding section, that no positive-proof could be brought in confirmation of the once prevalent doctrine of innate ideas, and it is natural to inquire what direct and positive evidence is there in favour of the account, which has now been given of the origin of our early thoughts?

In answer to this inquiry let it be observed, in the first place, that the statement, which has been made on this subject, recommends itself to the common experience, to what every individual can testify, to a greater or less degree, in regard to himself.

Our ideas at first are few in number; they are suggested by the objects, by which we are immediately surrounded; the greater number are from the senses or are forced upon us by our immediate wants, and a very small proportion only are abstract and remote. But we find, as we advance in years, as we become more and more acquainted



with facts in the natural world, and have more acquaintance with our fellow men, our ideas multiply, our views are more extensive, and that we no more jump at once into the full stature of knowledge, than we advance without any intermediate growth from infancy into manhood.

This is the general experience, the testimony, which each one can give for himself.

If, in the second place, having ourselves arrived to some degree of mental capacity and information, we observe the progress of the mind in infancy and childhood in those of our fellow beings, who have just entered on the early stages of their pilgrimage, we shall find, as far as we are able to judge from the facts coming within our observation, the same process going on in them, which our consciousness of the present and our memory of the past, "even from our boyish days," enables us to testify with no little confidence in our own case.

To the infant its nursery is the world. Its first ideas of the human race are its particular conceptions of its nurse and its mother; and the origin and history of all its notions may be traced to its animal wants, to the light, that breaks in from its window, and the few objects in the immediate neighbourhood of the cradle and of the hearth.

And, in the third place, it is not too much to say, that all the observations, which have been made on persons, who from their birth or at any subsequent period, have been deprived of any of the senses, and all the extraordinary facts, which have come to knowledge, having a bearing on this inquiry, go strongly in favour of the views which have been given.

It appears, for instance, from the observations, which have been made in regard to persons, who have been deaf until a particular period, and then have been restored to the faculty of hearing, that they have never previously had those ideas, which naturally come in by that sense. If a person has been born blind, the result is the same; or if having the sense of sight, it has so happened, that he has never seen any colours of a particular description. In the

one case he has no ideas of colours at all, and in the other, only of those colours, which he has seen.

Of those extraordinary instances, to which we alluded, as having thrown some light on the history of our intellectual acquisitions, is the account, which is given in the Memoirs of the French Academy of Sciences for the year 1703, of a deaf and dumb young man in the city of Chartres. At the age of three and twenty, it so happened, to the great surprise of the whole town, that he was suddenly restored to the sense of hearing, and in a short time he acquired the use of language. Deprived for so long a period of a sense, which in importance ranks with the sight and the touch, unable to hold communication with his fellow beings by means of oral or written language, and not particularly compelled, as he had every care taken of him by his friends, to bring his faculties into exercise, the powers of his mind remained without having opportunity to unfold themselves. Being examined by some men of discernment, it was found, that he had no idea of a God, of a soul, of the moral merit or demerit of human actions, and what might seem to be yet more remarkable, he knew not what it was to die; the agonies of dissolution, the grief of friends, and the ceremonies of interment being to him inexplicable mysteries.

Here we see how much knowledge a person was deprived of, merely by his wanting the single sense of hearing; a proof that the senses were designed by our Creator to be the original sources of knowledge, and that without them the faculties of the soul would never become operative.

The instance of the young man of Chartres is more particularly examined into, in Condillac's Essay on the Origin of Knowledge, at Section fourth of Part first, and the whole book may well be consulted by those, who wish for further information on this whole inquiry.

#### §. 59. *Simple ideas the elements of all our knowledge.*

Admitting the correctness of the views, which have been given, it follows, that from our simple ideas all others are derived.

As to the power, which we possess over the ideas in the mind, it may be observed, that we have no power to destroy or annul them by a mere volition; nor does it appear, that we are always able to detain an idea in the mind and make it an object of contemplation to the entire exclusion of others, at least, for any length of time. We can exert this power only in an imperfect degree.

But we have power,

(1) Of comparing ideas together in various respects, such as extent, degrees, time, place.

We have the power,

(2) of combining or compounding, an operation, by means of which we form what are termed complex ideas out of two or more simple ones variously put together.

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## CHAPTER SIXTH.

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### SIMPLE AND MIXED MODES.

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#### §. 60. *Division of complex ideas into three kinds.*

Those ideas, which are purely simple, are few in number, and may all be either traced, on the one hand, to some affection of the senses, or, on the other, to reflection, which is that observation or notice, which the mind takes of its own operations. But by the aid of the small number of simple ideas, a vast number of others are formed, which are termed complex. The power, which we possess, of forming complex ideas from simple ones, may be compared to our power of uniting together the letters of the alphabet in the formation of words, which are of themselves few in number, but lay the foundation of almost innumerable combinations.

Complex ideas are divided into three kinds, **MODES, SUBSTANCES, and RELATIONS.**

Modes are that class of complex ideas, which are sup-

posed not to exist independently by themselves, but are rather the dependencies on, the attributes, or the affections of substances; such as are expressed by the words, honour, gratitude, treachery, robbery, and also by the names of numbers and of mathematical figures, as dozen, twenty, square, parallelogram.

On this class or division of complex ideas we are to remark first; and shall consider them under two heads, viz., simple modes and mixed modes.

§. 61. *Of complex ideas called simple modes.*

SIMPLE MODES are complex ideas, made up of those simple ideas, which are all of the same kind; in other words, they are merely different modifications of the same original thought, carried on to a greater or less extent, but without any intermixture of foreign materials.

Of this class of ideas are a dozen, a score, a thousand, which are simple modes formed by the repeated addition of units as far on as the collections, specified by those names.

To this class belong ideas of time, as an hour, a day, a month, a year; and also ideas of extension in length, as a furlong, a mile, a league.

§. 62. *Of simple modes from number.*

The idea of unity is derived in some instances from the senses. That is to say, it is always suggested to the mind, whenever we find ourselves able to consider any external object; as distinct and separate from other objects. The consciousness also, which we cannot avoid, that the mind has different ideas or is in different states, and that, consequently, there is a real line of distinction between each succeeding state and that, which went before, gives us the same notion of unity or oneness. So that it is an idea, which we become possessed of, both by means of the senses, and from reflection; but it is a simple idea, as we cannot resolve it into any thing more elementary.

What are termed the simple modes of number, are formed by the repeating or addition of the original idea, and it is worthy of remark, that there is the utmost distinctness, a marked line of separation between each mode. The numbers, one, two, and three, are as distinct and separate from each other, as one hundred and two hundred.

Names are necessary to numbers. We repeat the idea of an unit, and this repetition or addition becomes a collective idea, to which we give the name of two. To the collective or complex idea, which arises on the addition of another unit, we give the name of THREE; all enumeration being, only the addition of units with the giving of names to the collective ideas thus formed. As diversities in numbers are only differences of more or less, and are not distinguished from each other by size or colour, or in other ways, but only by addition and subtraction, there seems to be the more need of names. If it should be admitted to be possible, that we may have simple modes of number without giving names, it is very evident, that without names we could not employ them in enumeration; so that they would in that case be entirely useless.

We find, that many uncivilized tribes of savages are unable to carry enumeration to any great extent, not because their minds are naturally incapable of this operation, but in consequence of the scanty materials of their languages. Mr. Locke mentions a Brazilian tribe, called the Tououpinambos, who had no names for numbers above five; any number beyond that they made out by showing their fingers and the fingers of those, who were present. When savages wish to express a very large number, they remind us of the leaves on the trees, the stars in the sky, and the sands on the sea-shore.

And the same remark a little qualified will apply to communities somewhat raised above the savage state. Thus Abraham was led abroad at night, and was commanded to try and number the stars; a much more expressive intimation of the great increase of his posterity, than could have been conveyed by the restricted power of the He-

brew numerals. See also the passage in the seventh of Judges, where the camels of the Midianites are compared to the sand by the sea-side for multitude.

In view of these remarks, two rules may be laid down in regard to correct enumeration,

(1) That the mind distinguish carefully two ideas, which differ from each other only by the addition or subtraction of an unit ;

(2) That it retain in memory the names or marks of the several intermediate combinations from an unit to the number, which completes the sum. Without an observance of these directions no one can be assured, that he has made a correct enumeration.

§. 63. *Extraordinary instance of skill in the use of numbers.*

A peculiar instance of ability in the combination of numbers may properly be mentioned here ; observing, however, in regard to the statement, that we have no other authority for its correctness than the weekly gazettes, but we see no reason to doubt its correctness.

A young lad in the State of Georgia, at this time (1826) ten years of age, can reduce any given number of miles to inches, years to seconds, &c., performing the whole operations in his head, and will give the result as quick as an expert calculator can with a pen. Among the questions asked him, were the following, which he solved with ease and expedition ; How many inches are there in 1,373,489 miles ? How often will a wheel, 5 ft. 6 in. in diameter, turn over in ninety miles ? What is the cube root of 24,743,682 ? He has on more than one occasion, and even before he was nine years of age, raised the number twelve to its fifteenth power—that is to say—multiplied that number into itself fifteen times. He can multiply three figures by three figures. This faculty was discovered in the lad at about eight years of age and has greatly improved since.

Some might look upon this as a sort of supernatural intuition ; but certainly without good reason. It is indeed extraordinary, but is a mere act of the memory, and differs

from ordinary cases, only in going so far beyond the reach of ordinary power. The distinction between the numbers is kept up; if he have any new method of combining the numbers, he is under the same necessity with others of giving separate names to each combination; there is no embarrassment, but the perception is exceedingly rapid, and the power of memory wonderful.

§. 64. *Simple modes from duration.*

It was remarked in speaking of our simple ideas, that our idea of **SUCCESSION** was obtained in this way. Our ideas, while we are awake, are constantly going in a train, one coming and another departing. In this way, having this regular appearance and disappearance of thought forced upon our attention, we receive the idea of **SUCCESSION**; and also by observing what takes place in external objects, such as the removal of bodies and the supply of their place by others, the changes of day and night, &c.

It is by the aid of the simple idea of succession, that we form the idea of **DURATION**, the ideas formed from which last have a claim to be ranked with the simple modes.

We are conscious not only of our existence, but of the continuance of our existence, or of our **PERSONAL IDENTITY**; we take it for *granted*, or rather it is forced upon us as an original characteristick of our minds, in every thing we do, in every step of reasoning. This indelible conviction, that we are what we have been, being considered in connection with our succession of ideas, gives rise to our idea of duration. So that whenever we can speak of our existence as commensurate with or measured by a certain number of ideas, we are furnished with this additional notion, to which the name of **DURATION** is given.

As we cannot have the notion of duration without succession, hence it happens, that we know nothing of duration, when we are perfectly asleep, because we know not, that there are then any of those intellectual changes, which we term succession of ideas. If a person could sleep with a perfect suspension of all his intellectual operations from

this time until the resurrection, the whole of that period would appear to him as nothing. Ten thousand years passed under such circumstances would be less than a watch in the night.

That it is only by comparing that consciousness, which, when awake, ever attends us, of the permanency of our own existence, with that ever successive change of states, to which the immaterial part of our being is subject, that we acquire our notions of duration, is in some measure proved by a variety of facts, which have been ascertained and preserved.

There is, for example, in the French work, *L'Histoire de l'Academie Royale des Sciences pour l'annee, 1719*, a statement to the following effect.

There was in Lausanne a nobleman, who, as he was giving orders to a servant, suddenly lost his speech and all his senses. Different remedies were tried, but, for a very considerable time, without effect. For six months he appeared to be in a deep sleep, unconscious of every thing. At the end of that period, however, resort having been had to certain chirurgical operations, he was suddenly restored to his speech and the exercise of his understanding. When he recovered, the servant, to whom he had been giving orders, when he was first seized with the distemper, happening to be in the room, he asked him, if he had done what he had ordered him to, not being sensible, that any interval, except perhaps a very short one, had elapsed during his illness.

We get the idea of TIME, by considering any part of duration, as set or marked off by periodical measures, such as days or years. And it should be remarked, when we consider our design of tracing all our ideas to sensation and reflection, that we obtain the idea of these lengths or measures by means of the senses, viz. by our observation of the annual and diurnal revolutions of the sun.

Under the simple modes from duration, then, may be reckoned minutes, hours, days, months, years, indeed every division, of which duration is susceptible.



§. 65. *Simple modes from extension.*

To extension, which is a simple idea, derived from the senses of sight and touch, we give the name of length, when it is contemplated as existing only in one direction.

All our artificial measures of extension, such as an inch, a foot, a yard, a furlong, a mile, a league, a degree, whatever may be the process of the mind in forming those measures, are among its simple modes.

That is to say, if we adopt an inch as the original measurement or the unit, from which we are to begin, then a foot consists of parts of extension, signified by the term inch, multiplied twelve times; and a yard is the same measure, increased or multiplied thirty six times.

§. 66. *Idea of infinity.*

Of our idea of infinity it seems difficult to give any satisfactory explanation or to say with certainty where it should be classed, but there are three things, with which we are in the habit of connecting it, viz. number, duration, and extension.

We form the idea of infinity of number by adding numbers as far as possible, with the additional notion, that this process may be carried on to any extent.

We form the idea of infinity of duration by repeating the ideas of time, such as an hour or a day, the same as in number.

We obtain the idea of infinity of extension, or rather of that modification of extension, which is termed LENGTH, in the same manner, by repeating the ideas of an inch, a foot, a yard, or some other measure, always feeling, when we have carried on this addition to the utmost extent of which we are capable, that it may be prosecuted still further, indefinitely.

We seem to ourselves to receive the clearest idea of infinity from number, because the distinction between all its modes is very accurately marked, so that we have a well defined perception of it. Indeed it does not appear, that,

without the assistance of number, we could ever form the ideas of infinity of duration and extension.

We obtain the idea of **ETERNITY** by supposing our ideas of time, for instance, a month or year, repeated in both directions, in time past as well as in that which is to come, always keeping the idea of the possibility of the further prosecution of this process of repeating.

§. 67. *Of the complex ideas called mixed modes.*

Mixed modes are complex ideas, the attributes or dependencies of substances, compounded of simple ideas of different kinds. Instances are the ideas of theft, murder, gratitude, &c.

**THEFT** is a change of property without the consent of the owner; consequently, embraces among other ideas, differing from each other, those of ownership, transference, and consent.

**MURDER** is putting a person to death with evil intention or malice aforethought; consequently includes the ideas of man, death, evil feelings.

**GRATITUDE** is an emotion of love or complacency towards a person for some act of kindness, which he has done to us. In this mixed mode, therefore, we have reference, not only to the person, who has received the benefit, but to the person, who conferred it, as well as to the act itself and the intellectual emotion excited.

§. 68. *Three ways of forming mixed modes.*

There are three ways in particular, in which we appear to receive into the mind **MIXED** modes.

(1) The first method is by experience or observation of the things themselves.

We see a person wrestling, swimming, or fencing, and thence learn the ideas, conveyed by those words.

(2) The second method is by invention or voluntarily putting together several simple ideas in our own minds.

The person, that first invented etching or printing, had an acquaintance both with the complex ideas, and some

subordinate ideas conveyed in those terms, before they could have existed in the minds of others.

(3) Third method,—By taking ideas, which already exist in the mind, and which, being generally known, may be considered common property, and combining them together; for example in the word, falsehood.

By examining the mixed modes and tracing them to their original elements, we shall find them ultimately connected with the great sources of our knowledge, sensation and reflection.

§. 69. *Not the same mixed modes in all languages.*

The customs, habits, modes of thinking, political institutions, &c are not the same in all countries, but differ in greater or less degree. Hence there is need of different expressions that is, of expressions in one language not precisely corresponding to expressions in another.

Thus the word, *OSTRAKISMOS* in the Greek, *PROSCRIPTIO* in the Latin, and *CORBAN* in the Hebrew, expressed ideas, to which most other nations found nothing precisely corresponding, and, consequently, had no corresponding term.

This suggests a remark on the changes, which take place in languages. It is well known, that there are constant alterations in customs, and hardly less frequent fluctuations in feeling and opinion, and hence there necessarily arise new combinations of thought or ideas; and these must be expressed by new names.

If people should be found unable or unwilling to invent new names for the expression of new complex ideas, they would evidently be subjected to great inconvenience. This may be seen, if we deprive ourselves of the benefit of any complex terms, for instance, *reprieve* and *appeal*, and attempt to converse on the subjects, where they naturally occur.

We do not consider a mixed mode, as actually existing in a language without a name.

The number of mixed modes, therefore, in any language, although it might be greatly increased, is looked

upon as limited by the number of names or words, by which they are expressed.

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## CHAPTER SEVENTH.

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### IDEAS OF SUBSTANCE.

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#### §. 70. *What we are to understand by ideas of substance.*

In regard to those material bodies, by which we are surrounded, we can properly and in truth be said to have a knowledge only of those qualities in them, which are the cause of our simple ideas, or of which our simple ideas are representative. We truly know this, and nothing more; it being altogether beyond our power to form an acquaintance with that, whatever it is, which is imagined to be the essence, SUBSTRATUM, or support of these qualities.

The sentiment here conveyed is expressed in shorter terms by saying, that our knowledge of bodies is limited to the knowledge of their properties.

An idea of substance is that complex state of the mind, which considers a number of qualities, belonging to any particular substance as one, or as naturally and permanently united. And this is the second general division or class of our complex ideas.

Instances are the complex ideas, expressed by the words, sun, loadstone, man, horse, iron, tree, indeed all those intellectual states, which correspond to that great variety of separate, material objects, which continually come beneath our inspection.

In the idea of man we have, among others, the simple ideas of figure, colour, motion, conscience.

#### §. 71. *Spiritual existences included under this class.*

But ideas of substance are not to be limited, as might

at first from these remarks be inferred, to material objects; this division includes many from another source. Under this class is to be included our ideas of spiritual existences, of the mind, of the soul in its disembodied state, of angels, of God himself.

It is true, they are not substances in the ordinary meaning of the term, that is, they are not *material* substances, like the sensible objects, with which we are so much conversant, and to which we almost exclusively apply that name.

But they are substances in this sense,—they are real and not imaginary,—they have an existence,—they are not the mere relations of one thing to another, not the mere dependencies on them, but the things themselves.

But some will doubt, whether we have that clear knowledge of mind and of spiritual things in general, which we have of bodies material; and on this ground think, that they ought not to be included in the same division of our complex notions.—This is a point, worthy a moment's notice.

§. 72. *Our knowledge of spirit the same as of matter.*

Although it may appear strange to some, when we say, that we know no more of matter, about which we are daily conversant, and which we see and touch, than concerning mental or spiritual existences, which our bodily senses are unable to approach and examine, it is a sentiment at last almost universally received, and with the very best reason. It has already been remarked of matter, that we know nothing concerning it but by its properties, and we know nothing of immaterial existences likewise, except by their properties; and our knowledge, therefore, is in both cases on the same footing, being the same in kind at least, if not in degree. Our acquaintance with the properties of material bodies may possibly go further than our acquaintance with those of mind, but it is in both cases circumscribed by the same limitation, unable to advance beyond those properties.

Observing certain mental operations, thinking, remembering, willing, assenting, doubting, and the like, we cannot avoid the conviction of the existence of something, to which they belong, or of which they are qualities; and we call it spirit or a spiritual being.

The same of matter;—we learn its qualities, primary and secondary, colour, extension, figure, motion, divisibility, &c.; and these, viewed by the mind in their state of combination or as having a common and coetaneous origin, give us the idea of what we call matter or substance.

If it be asked, how it happens, that we so uniformly refer these operations to what we term substance or spirit, or rather how they are so promptly suggested on the observation of the properties, (there being an universal belief in the existence of the material and spiritual world,) the only answer is that, already remarked upon in the second chapter; viz. *That we thus constituted*; we are under a sort of *necessity*, in consequence of the natural tendencies of our constitution, of connecting with the appearances, which we witness, the idea of a really existing something, which we call, either matter or mind, material or spiritual, according to the character of those appearances.

But when this idea is once suggested, we are taught by the inutility of our efforts to proceed any further, that we have reached one boundary of our knowledge, which we cannot pass; and that while we have an idea of matter and spirit, and cannot but believe in their existence, we know no more of them, nor shall we probably ever know more, than those appearances and operations, whatever they may be, which they shall exhibit.

### §. 73. *Of cohesion of bodies and motion by impulse.*

If there be any, who, after what has been said, think they understand matter better than they do spirit, then would we desire them to give an explanation of what that is in matter, which is termed cohesion. That the particles of gold, of iron, of water, and other material bodies are held together by what is termed cohesion, is a fact, which

being within our daily observation, no one is inclined to doubt, but it is the fact only which we know, and nothing more.

One body impinging on another puts it in motion, and we term it motion by impulse. But how motion passes from one body to another, when the particles of those bodies come in contact, if indeed there can be any actual contact, is by no means so easy to be determined. It will be found as difficult to be understood and explained as any of those obstacles, which are supposed to stand in the way of a full knowledge of spiritual existences.

Some further illustrations of this subject in particular instances remain to be made.

§. 74. *Explanations on certain ideas of this class.*

If called upon to give an account of the loadstone, which is the name of one of the many ideas of substance, we could give no other answer than by an enumeration of its qualities,—something, which has colour, hardness, friability, power to draw iron.

The sun has been mentioned, as one among the complex ideas of substances, but little more do we know of it than this, that it is an aggregate of certain qualities or simple ideas, such as brightness, heat, roundness, regularity of motion.

We say of gold, that it is a combination of the qualities of yellowness, great weight, fusibility, ductility, &c. existing together, and forming the material substance, to which we give that name.

§. 75. *Remarks on complexity in the states of the mind.*

It would seem from the statement thus far given in regard to our ideas of substance, that there is in this class of our thoughts a complexity in the state of the mind, corresponding to the complexity in the object, and without this complexity, in all cases, of the intellectual principle, there cannot be what is termed a complex idea. But it is not to be

thought, that we arrive at this ultimate complexity of mental state by a single act, by an undivided and inseparable movement of the mind, although, such is the rapidity of the process, it may in some cases seem to be so.

On the contrary, every simple idea, involved in, and forming a part of the compound, so far as we have any distinct conception of the compounded idea, passes under a rapid review, and the complex state of the mind or complex idea is the result of this rapid review.

We cannot, for instance, have a complex idea of man, of iron, or of a tree, without having first, at some time, subjected each simple idea of which it is made up, to a particular examination.

This glance of the mind at the various simple ideas is performed indeed with such extreme quickness, at least generally so, that the successive steps of it are not recollected; but this, when we consider the rapidity of the mind's operations in other instances, is no sufficient objection to the statement, which has been made.

The process in the formation of complex ideas goes on from step to step, from one simple idea to another, but when the examination is completed, the ultimate state of the mind, which the completion of the process implies, is not to be considered as in any degree wanting in unity or oneness.

§. 76. *Connection existing between material substances to be considered.*

In forming our complex ideas of substances, it is highly important, that they should be conformed, as nearly as possible, to the real nature of things; and that we should not combine in the idea any thing, which is not in the substance. And in order to this, it should be remembered, that bodies are operated upon one by another, and exhibit to us different qualities, in consequence of this operation.

One of the qualities of gold is yellowness, but break off entirely the intercourse between the particles of gold and the rays of light, and yellowness ceases. Life and motion are ideas, which commonly enter into our complex



notion of animals; but deprive them of air; and life and motion are gone.

We would not say, that, in these particular instances, in our complex ideas of gold and of animal, that these ideas, yellowness, life, and motion are to be struck out; but use them merely as an illustration, that in making up our complex notion of any substances, we are to consider not only the objects themselves, but also to take into view other objects, which have an influence on them.

### §. 77. *Of chimerical ideas of substances.*

There are certain ideas, the consideration of which properly falls in this chapter, termed CHIMERICAL; the ideas, for example expressed by the words, centaur, dragon, hypogriff, harpy.

The centaur is represented, as an animal, partly man, and partly horse. The dragon is supposed to be an immense serpent furnished with wings and capable of making its way through the atmosphere by their aid. The hypogriff is an imaginary horse, capable of performing aerial journeys in the same way.

Ideas of this kind are termed chimerical, because there is nothing corresponding to them in nature,—there is no reality of the sort intimated by the term.

If a person were known to have an idea of a body, yellow or of some other colour, malleable, fixed, possessing in a word all the qualities of iron or of gold with this difference only, of its being lighter than water, it would be what we term a chimerical idea—that is—it would have nothing corresponding to it in the nature of things.

### §. 78. *Of what is meant by real ideas.*

REAL IDEAS are the opposite of chimerical, having a correspondence with natural things, or being such ideas as things in their true nature are fitted to produce.

Hence simple ideas are real, because there can be no simple idea, except it be such as nature in some of its forms is fitted to produce within us;—also simple modes

are real, because they are only the multiplications or repetitions of some simple idea.

Excepting such chimerical ideas, as were mentioned in the preceding section, viz. dragon, centaur, faery, harpy, hypogriff, ghost, hobgoblin, iron lighter than water, &c. all ideas of substance are real. But when we speak of ideas of substance, with such exceptions as above, being real, we do not mean to say, that they do perfectly and in all respects represent their corresponding objects.

In our complex idea of gold, we combine the simple ideas of yellowness, weight, malleability, and perhaps others, but probably none combine, in their conception of it, all its properties; so that, although we speak of it, as a *real*, we do not speak of it, as a perfect or adequate idea. The same of other instances.

Further, it may be incidentally remarked, that chimerical ideas are in general formed in times of ignorance and superstition, and people suppose themselves to see what in truth never was seen by them.

#### §. 79. *Importance of having real ideas.*

Ideas are the elements or materials, about which the mind is employed in its various operations, and without which we can neither have opinion, nor faith, nor reasoning, nor knowledge. - It is true, that those ideas, which are termed chimerical, and of which there are no archetypes in nature, admit of being compared together, and if we adopt the definition given by Mr. Locke, that KNOWLEDGE is the perception of the agreement or disagreement of ideas, they may be considered as furnishing grounds of knowledge, but the superstructure will partake of the character of the foundation; in other words, it will be CHIMERICAL.

We might ever so long puzzle ourselves in the investigation of such fantastical thoughts, and in the end be none the wiser.

The greater number a person has of such ideas, he is so much the poorer, as we do not account a man rich,

whose coffers are filled with "hay, wood, and stubble;" instead of the precious metals.

Every person, therefore, is not to be considered well furnished, who has a great number of ideas, merely from the circumstance of the greatness of their number; but their character in various respects, their justness, their objects, and their conformity to those objects are to be taken into consideration; which is much the same as to say, that a few real ideas are of more value, than many chimerical ones.

#### §. 80. *Of our ideas of angels.*

We have our knowledge of mind in the same way as of matter, that is, by an observation of its qualities. And we are led from the accounts given of celestial messengers, to conceive of that class of beings, to which the term, *angels*, is applied, as if there were some resemblance or analogy, existing between our minds and them; in other words, we regard them, as spiritual or immaterial.

But we do not speak of them, as to their nature and powers, with the same degree of confidence, with which we speak of the human mind and of matter, since they are a class of beings, not coming under the examination of the senses, neither are they to be examined by us in the way, in which we can form an acquaintance with our own intellectual part.

For our knowledge, therefore, of angels and of any other class of beings superior to ourselves but subordinate to the Deity, we must rest satisfied with what information is given us in the Holy Scriptures.

#### §. 81. *Origin of the idea of God.*

Among the complex ideas, included under this class, is to be mentioned in particular that of God; and the origin of it on the principles of Mr. Locke, which are in the main adopted in this book, seems to be naturally accounted for in this way.

We suppose a person entirely separated from the rest

of the world, dwelling in some distant island, and furnished, as it were, only with the senses, and with the variety of objects around him, fitted to operate upon them.

He will, in the first place, connect together certain things, as antecedents and consequents, or what is the same thing, as causes and effects, such as the waving of woods and the blowing of the wind, the wearing away of the shore and the motion of the waves against it.

Having in this way formed an idea of antecedent and consequent, it will be found, in the second place, that the thought will, ere a long period, arise slowly and dimly in his mind, that those appearances in nature, which he has been in the habit of regarding as antecedents or causes, should themselves have a cause; that while the tempest breaks down in his own sight the forest, there should, and must be some one to guide the storm, and while the shore crumbles beneath the incursions of the ocean, there must be something, though where or what it is, he cannot tell, which both pushes on and restrains its raging.

The idea at first, it must be admitted, is an obscure one, but it in time becomes less so; for nothing can be more true than the assertion of the Psalmist, that, in reference to the glory of God, "Day unto day uttereth speech, and night unto night showeth knowledge."

We remarked in regard to the great first Cause, which the natural workings of soul in our solitary islander will sooner or later inevitably discover, that he is unable to say, where or what it is; and this inability becomes in the end, a favourable circumstance. He cannot say of that first Cause, that it is in the stars, or in the ocean, or in the wild waste of the wilderness, but conscious of this inability to discover it in any particular place, he learns to identify it not with one merely, but with *every* "local habitation," and to associate it with all unmeasured space, and although he can in one sense say, it is no where, he can, in another, say, *God is every where.*

## CHAPTER EIGHTH.

### IDEAS OF RELATION.

§. 82. *What we are to understand by ideas of relation.*

The third, general division of our complex ideas is into IDEAS OF RELATION, which are formed by the comparison of our thoughts, one with another.

The mind, in the exercise of its various operations, has the power of considering objects or rather the ideas standing for objects, in such a manner that it does, as it were, bring them together and set them side by side, and see how they conform to each other, or how they differ;—in other words, discovers their relations. Take this illustration.

When we consider Lorenzo, as distinct and separate from all others of his fellow beings, and make Lorenzo alone and exclusively the subject of our contemplations, we have merely the complex idea of a man, bearing that name. But then Lorenzo may be a father, a son, a brother, a citizen, a legislator; these terms express ideas of relation.

When we speak of Lorenzo as a father, the mind first turns itself from the man himself to his children, and having considered the relation they sustain, with sufficient reason ascribes to him the attribute of paternity.

Any of our ideas, already existing in the mind, may lay the foundation of other ideas of relation, since they may in general be compared together, or, at least, if they cannot themselves be readily placed side by side, may be the occasion of bringing others into comparison.

§. 83. *Of the great number of our ideas of relation.*

Mr. Locke has the remark, that it would make a volume to go over all sorts of relations, and with good reason;

since they are as numerous, as that almost endless variety of respects, in which our ideas may be compared together, and of that multitude of circumstances, which are to be taken into view in such comparisons. With the single idea of man how many others are connected in consequence of the various relations, which he sustains !

He may, at one and the same time, be a father, brother, son, grandfather, grandson, father-in-law, son-in-law, husband, friend, enemy, subject, general, judge, patron, client, professor, European, Englishman, islander, servant, master, possessor, superiour inferiour, bigger, less, older, younger, contemporary, like, unlike, together with sustaining a variety of other relations too numerous to be mentioned. We shall not pretend, therefore, to exhaust the subject, but shall leave it to the reader more fully to pursue it, as opportunity and inclination may prompt, having first submitted to him a few prominent hints.

§. 84. *Of the use of correlative terms.*

Correlative terms are such terms, as are used to express corresponding ideas of relation.

They suggest the relations with great readiness, and by means of them the mind can be more steadily, and longer, and with less pain, fixed upon the ideas, of which they are expressive. The words, father and son, legislator and constituents, brother and sister, husband and wife, and others of this class, as soon as they are named, at once carry our thoughts beyond the persons, who are the subjects of these relations, to the relations themselves. Wherever, therefore, there are correlative terms, the relations may be expected to be clear to the mind.

The word, CONCUBINE, is a relative term, but there being no word correlative, expressing a corresponding relation, we find it more difficult to form a conception of the thing signified, than of brother, which has the correlative, sister, and of wife, which has the correlative, husband.

It should be remembered, that the relation is something different from the things related.

A person may sustain the relation and be called a father to-day, and to-morrow his children may be dead ; still he is the same man, though this relation has ceased. The relations, which we sustain are frequently changing, while the subjects of them are the same.

§. 85. *Of proportional relations.*

Among the various, subordinate divisions, of which our RELATIONS are susceptible, there is one class, including a considerable number of ideas of this kind, called PROPORTIONAL RELATIONS.

In this minor division may be included all those ideas, which are capable of being considered as made up of parts or as susceptible of different degrees ; and of consequence, admitting of being compared as to more or less. Hence their name, because we consider the proportion which they sustain to others, as to size or degrees.

Instances are whiter, sweeter, holier, larger, smaller, nobler,—indeed all adjectives, which admit of being put into the comparative or superlative.

We cannot say of one apple, that it is sweeter than another, or of one man, that he is holier than another, without involving the supposition, that they have been compared together, the apples as to their degrees of sweetness, and the persons spoken of as to their degrees of holiness.

§. 86. *Certain terms are relative which are supposed to be positive.*

There are certain terms also, whether they are to be classed with the proportional relations or not, is not essential to inquire, but which are supposed to be positive terms and not to intimate any comparison or relative consideration of other ideas ;—we allude to no small number of adjectives in the positive degree ;—take as instances, the epithets wise, ignorant, rich, poor, old, young. However these may at first sight appear to be entirely positive, and have been considered to be so, and as excluding any comparative references, they may be found on examination to

be of a somewhat different character from what has often been imagined.

Let it, then, be considered what we mean, when we say of a person, He is old ; we evidently compare him in regard to his age, whenever we use those expressions, with others, with people in general, and place the particular number of years, to which he may have attained, by the side of that period, which we are in the habit of regarding as the ordinary limit of man's pilgrimage.

The same, when we say of any person, that he is young; he is then considered as falling far short of an assumed period, an approximation to which gives to another person the reputation of age.

Again, when we say of any individual, that he is wise or ignorant, we tacitly make a comparison of what he has learnt with the acquisitions of mankind in general. If it exceed the ordinary sum of human knowledge, we call him wise ; if it fall short, he is characterized, as ignorant.

Accordingly, a comparison of this sort being implied in the use of epithets, a North American savage, or a person of any other uncivilized race, might enjoy the reputation of great wisdom among his own people, who could not but be accounted ignorant in any philosophical society of a civilized nation.

#### §. 87. *Of ideas of natural relations.*

SECONDLY ; Having mentioned proportional relations, as forming a minor or subordinate division of this third, general class of our complex ideas, it is to be noticed here, that there is another, a SECOND occasion of comparing things together, so as to ascertain ideas of relation ; viz. When we consider their origin or beginning, and see how other things stand in reference to that origin. And such ideas as are ascertained in this way, and are found to result, as it were, from creation and nature, are what are termed IDEAS OF NATURAL RELATIONS.

It seems to be particularly characteristick of those relations, which we have now in view, that they are perma-



nent ; meaning by the remark, that they are not altered and brought to an end by ordinary circumstances ; but, as they begin to exist at the moment of birth, will be found to terminate only with the life either of the subject of the relation or of the correlated person.

Such are the ideas of father, brother, son, nephew, &c.

Mr. Locke mentions the term, countrymen, that is, those, who were born in the same country or tract of ground, as belonging here.

§. 88. *Of ideas of instituted or conventional relations.*

THIRDLY ; There are relations, which do not result from the constitution of nature, but are the consequence of the various obligations and duties in civil society ; and these, therefore, may be called ideas of CONSTITUTED OR CONVENTIONAL RELATIONS.

Thus a GENERAL is one, who has the power to command an army, this power being delegated to him by virtue of certain provisions, entering originally into the terms of the civil compact.

AN ARMY is a collection or body of armed men, who are under obligations, by the terms of such civil compact, to obey one man.

A CITIZEN OR BURGHER is one, who has a right to the privileges of civil society in a certain place, that is to say, is the subject of some government, to the principles of whose organization he is supposed to have consented, and to have taken a part in it.

These relations may be distinguished from the natural relations in the preceding section, by the circumstance, that they are not permanent, but are dependent upon the will or agreement of men, and may terminate before the subjects of them have ceased to exist.

The general may cease to act in that capacity, since the government, who gave him his authority, may take it away again. The army may be disbanded, and the bonds of civil society may be broken loose, and its members go

back again into the unrestricted freedom of the state of nature.

It is not thus in natural relations. The father is a father, so long as the son lives, the son sustains the filial relation so long as the existence of the father, and, in all cases of this description, the relations do not terminate, until one of the correlated persons is no more.

§. 89. *Place is an idea of relation.*

We cannot conceive of any body having place or position, without comparing it with some other bodies. If, therefore, having two bodies fixed, or which maintain the same relative position, we can compare a third body with them, the third body can then be said to have place or position.

This may be illustrated by the chess-men, placed on the chess-board. We say, the men are in the same place, although the board may have been removed from one room to another. We use this language, because we consider the men only in relation to each other and the parts of the board, and not in relation to the rooms or parts of the room.

Hence we may clearly have an idea of the place or position of all the different parts of the universe, considered separately, because they may be compared with other parts.

But we are unable to form any idea of the place or position of the universe considered, as a whole, because we have then no other body, with which we can compare it.

§. 89. *Chronological dates involve ideas of relation.*

The independence of the North American colonies was declared, July 4th, 1776.

These expressions may be thus explained.

We assume the present year, 1826, as a given period and reckon back to the year, *one*, which coincides with the birth of our Saviour; then the year, 1776, expresses the

distance between these two extremes, viz. one, and eighteen hundred, twenty six. This seems to be all we learn, when we say, the Independence of the United States was declared at the period mentioned.

We mean the same thing, and convey the same idea, whether we say that the Saviour was born in the year, ONE, of the Christian era, or, in the year, 4004, from the creation of the world. But, in the first case, the year, 4004, expresses the distance between these two extremes, viz. the beginning of the world, and the present time; while, in the second instance, the event itself forms the beginning of the series.

So that all dates appear to be properly classed under ideas of relation.

#### §. 90. *Cause and effect ideas of relation.*

CAUSE and EFFECT, which are nothing more than regular antecedents and consequents, as already repeatedly remarked, belong here. They certainly have a relation to each other, for we cannot conceive of a cause, if we exclude from the list of our ideas the correlative notion of effect, nor, on the other hand, do we call any thing an effect without a reference to some antecedent.

It would seem from an examination of the process of the mind, in regard to these ideas, that we derive our notion of effect from an observation of the changes, which take place in bodies around us. When any change has happened, we necessarily feel, as if something had been done, and we term it an effect, having a mental reference to something antecedent, as before mentioned. So that we have the idea of effect, in the first instance, by means of the senses; and as we cannot have an idea of cause without its correlative, we may look upon this idea also as capable of being traced to the same source; and both of them, when we notice their mutual dependence and connection, are to be considered as most naturally coming under the general class of relations.

§. 91. *Modes, substances, and relations resolvable into simple ideas.*

All our complex ideas, whether **MODES**, **SUBSTANCES**, or **RELATIONS**, may be traced back and resolved into simple ideas, although it may not be very obvious, in some instances, how this is to be done, or when we have arrived at the end of the analysis.

It seems in general to be more easy to ascertain what are the simple ideas, which enter into the formation of the two first classes, than of the third. But nothing, it must be confessed, is so much wanting as the patience necessary to go into a careful examination of our thoughts, in order to a successful result even in this last class.

When we say, that honey is sweeter than bread, or that iron is harder than wax, the words, **SWEETER** and **HARDER** express relations or relative ideas, but being analyzed, so far as we are able to, they clearly terminate in the simple ideas of sweetness and hardness.

When we say of any individual, whom we happen to see, that he is our friend or our enemy, words, which not only express relations, but are correlative to each other, what do we mean to say or imply in the use of such expressions, but this; viz.

(1) That he is a man, (2) That he exercises love or hatred, (3) That we are the subjects of it. And having made this general analysis of the terms, we are then to consider what the complex notion, expressed by the word, **MAN**, is made up of, to inquire also where the idea of **LOVE** or of **HATRED** is to be classed, and what is its origin, &c. And thus we shall in the end arrive at those ideas, which are termed simple.

At present no further remarks remain to be made by us on the subject of the origin of our ideas. As this Treatise is designed for beginners in the science, to be more particular might tend rather to discourage, than to lead them on in the path of knowledge; and yet, we trust, such a view of it has been taken, as will not only be deemed in general correct, but sufficiently extensive to satisfy a moderate curiosity.

We finish this chapter with a few practical remarks on furnishing our minds with ideas.

It was observed in the seventy ninth section, that a few *real* ideas are of more consequence than many chimerical ones, and let it to be admitted to be a just remark. But of such ideas, as are real, as are consistent, as are distinct, and ready at command, there cannot be too many, any more than a man can have an excess of truth or an exuberance of moral virtue.

§. 92. *The mind should be furnished with a store of ideas.*

As early as possible should the mind be furnished with a rich variety of thoughts. Although it be proper and oftentimes necessary, that persons should direct their attention more to some particular subject than others, yet he cannot be considered as possessed of a good education, who is not in some degree acquainted with many subjects.

Our acquisitions are not to be limited to the affairs of our own country, but we are to become acquainted with the history of other nations also; and while there is much to be learnt, that is modern, the records of antiquity are not to be neglected. We are to learn things both of a political and a religious kind, those, which have relation to the mechanick arts, the laws of nature, the intercourse of life, the principles of the mind, and on a variety of other subjects.

Some of the benefits of possessing a large fund of ideas, which are the elements or materials of our knowledge, are these.

(1) It enables us to take a wide, and, therefore, in general a more accurate view of subjects.

In regard to every science there are some things true and some things false, and we are constantly liable to error; it may, therefore, well be expected, that he, who has a large store of ideas in that science, which he can examine and compare together, stands so much the better

chance of having his sentiments well balanced and correct.

A person, designing to pursue the study of law or of theology, may be of the opinion, that a knowledge of chymistry, of natural philosophy, or of the physiology of the human sytem, may be of no advantage to him, as a lawyer, theologian, &c., but there are many things, it may be replied, even if we admit the propriety of this opinion, the knowledge of which may not be so particularly beneficial in one's chosen pursuit, but of which, nevertheless, it would be highly discreditable to be ignorant.

Moreover, a lawyer, who is quite familiar with the principles of his particular department, may sometimes find himself a little perplexed, even when debating in a court of justice, in consequence of his ignorance of the chymical art, and a judge has been known to be confused, in making up a decision on a case of suspected murder, for want of a more intimate acquaintance with the philosophy of our animal organization.

(2) There is a second advantage, resulting from this enlarged and general acquaintance with things, viz. It will help, on the one hand, to preserve us from an excess of credulity or too readily believing every thing, which is proposed to us for our assent, and, on the other, will be likely to guard us from a positive and, dogmatical turn of mind.

There are many things, which at first sight appeared strange and incredible, but were afterwards found by us to be true. The more extensive the range of our ideas, the more shall we have found of instances of this sort. Hence when any thing is stated, however strange it may at first appear, we shall not be disposed to affirm or deny in respect to it with dogmatism, but to inquire further.

The more we know also in general, the more we shall, consequently, know, in particular, of intentional deceptions, and of the various unavoidable causes of mistake, and shall thus be strengthened against the indulgence of an extreme credulity.

These are advantages, which are not to be lightly prized, and are a sufficient reason, why we should early at-

tempt to furnish ourselves with many ideas on a variety of subjects, by our personal observation of what things take place around us, by reading judicious books, and by conversation.

One fruitful source of ideas is conversation. We may learn something even in conversing with those persons, who have not had the advantages of a liberal education, and whose time is perhaps chiefly taken up in the exercise of some mechanick art, or in manual labour in the cultivation of the soil.

It is to be remarked further, that we are not to despise the conversation of those, who are of slow utterance, and whose conversation is thought to be rather uninteresting. It is a remark of Dean Swift, which has some philosophy in it, that the common fluency of speech in many persons is owing to a scarcity of words and ideas. For whoever, as he reasons on the subject, is master of language and has a mind full of ideas, will be apt, in speaking, to hesitate upon the choice of both. Whereas common speakers have only one set of ideas and one set of words to clothe them in, and these are always ready. It is something like people coming fast out of a church, when it is nearly empty, but slow when there is a large crowd.

NOTE. In passing from the origin of our ideas to the subject treated of in the next chapter, we have only to say, that we follow an order in the discussion, which naturally suggests itself. We do not mean to assert, that the arrangement will appear perfectly natural to every one at first sight, although it will be likely to, on a little examination.

Having spoken of the origin of our ideas, which are the materials, about which the mind employs itself, it surely comes in course to examine those states of mind, where there is supposed to be a real perception of external objects, but is not; and which, therefore, are a species of false or illusive ideas, not resulting from the natural operations of the intellect, and not furnishing grounds of knowledge.

## CHAPTER NINTH.

### OF APPARITIONS.

#### §. 93. *What we are to understand by apparitions.*

Angels have appeared on earth. The Almighty has permitted it, as one means of forwarding the Scripture revelation, so necessary to mankind; also other preternatural appearances in connection with the same great object.

It is hardly necessary to mention, among other instances, the appearance of the angel to Manoah and his wife, the sudden arrival of one of the same class of beings to release Peter from prison, and the circumstances of the Transfiguration.

As the canon of Scripture has long been closed, and the days of miracles are over, it does not rightly fall to us to consider the cases, to which we have alluded, and, further, they do not properly come under the head of APPARITIONS, since they were not merely imagined appearances, but real.

Apparitions are appearances, which seem to be real, but which exist only in the imagination.

There may be apparitions, then, of departed spirits, of angels, of celestial cities, of landscapes, of mountains and precipices, of festivals, triumphs, funeral processions, temples. There may be apparitions of all things, which exist, and of some things which do not exist.

We may imagine, that we see such things, as have been mentioned, and others, and firmly believe, that they are before us, or that we are in the midst of them, and all of it be merely a mental deception.

#### §. 94. *Of the connection between the mind and body.*

All apparitions, it may be said with safety, are owing



either to a permanently disordered state of the mind, or to some unnatural, temporary excitement; but mental diseases is a subject full of difficulty. Whether the immaterial principle have diseases of itself and peculiarly its own, independently of its connection with the body, or whether all its disorders may be traced to that connection, is a point, on which, in the present, limited state of our knowledge on this subject, it would be presumption to offer any positive opinion.

But whether all our intellectual derangements can be traced to the connection, existing between the mind and body, or not, it is very certain, that this is the case with very many of them. A few well known facts will help to illustrate the influence of the body over the mind.

(1) Old age may be considered as a disease, and the effects on the mind go, step and step, with those on the body. The mental vigour in those, who are experiencing the decrepitudes of age, is in most cases evidently impaired. The intellectual is hardly less deaf and blind, and stands hardly less in need of crutches to support it, than the bodily system.

(2) Violent, corporeal diseases in manhood, before any decays take place from age, often affect the powers of thought. Persons have been known after a violent fever or violent attacks of any other kind, to lose entirely the power of recollection; a circumstance to be remarked upon in the chapter on memory.

(3) Many things of a stimulating nature, when taken into the system, do in some way violently affect the mind. This is in particular true of the nitrous oxide gas;—when it is inhaled in a considerable quantity, the conceptions are more vivid, associated trains of thought are of increased rapidity, and emotions are excited, corresponding to the acuteness of sensations and the vividness of ideas.

(4) In general, whenever the physical condition of the brain, which is a prominent organ in the process of perception, is affected, whether it be from a more than common fulness of the blood vessels, or from other causes,

the mind itself will be found to be affected also ; and oftentimes in a high degree.

Facts of this description will help us, in some measure, in the explanation of those states of the mind, which are called APPARITIONS ; but with whatever light may be derived from this source, the whole subject still remains in some obscurity and open to many further inquiries.

§. 95. *This subject illustrated from Shakspeare.*

The definition, which we give of apparitions, is, that they are appearances, which seem to be real, but which exist only in the imagination. But how does it happen, that they are merely imaginary, when they have so much the appearance of reality ? The answer is, that they are ideas or conceptions, in no ways differing from ordinary conceptions but this, that they are more vivid ; and it is in consequence of being so much more vivid than common, that the conceptions are mistaken for the thing conceived of, a state of the mind, which is brought about on the principles of association, for the real object, which was originally the cause of that state of mind. The conception of the man, of the mountain, the temple, or the procession, is so intense, so extremely vivid, that we as firmly believe them to be really in our view, as when at some former period we truly beheld them.

In many cases, this great intensity and vividness of conceptions may be traced to some affection of the bodily system, as has already been intimated ; when, for instance, a person has inhaled a quantity of nitrous oxide gas, when there is a general strong excitement of the nervous system, or when it so happens, that the blood vessels of the brain are overcharged. There are, however, some instances of apparitions, which baffle the efforts of any solution of this sort.

Few persons have exhibited a more intimate acquaintance with the principles of the mental constitution, than Shakspeare. He was not ignorant of the fact, that the human mind, under certain circumstances, is in such a po-

sition, that imaginary appearances impress it as strongly, and seem to be as truly and really before it, as any objects whatever, which are actually beheld by us.

Thus, when Macbeth is preparing to slay Duncan, he beholds the apparition of a dagger.

"Is this a dagger, which I see before me,

"The handle towards my hand? Come, let me clutch thee.

"I have thee not, and yet I see thee still.

It was not true, that Macbeth saw any thing, although, if he had clutched the dagger in his hand, he would not have believed more firmly in its existence and presence, than he did.

From this tragedy and also from others, we have evidence of what has been stated,

(1) That Shakespeare believed and knew, that there are APPARITIONS or mental conceptions so vivid, as to be mistaken for realities;

(2) And also that he considered apparitions to be owing to a disordered state of the mind, whatever might be the cause of that mental derangement, whether bodily or in the mind itself.

In the present instance, he seems to me obscurely to intimate an opinion, that the APPARITION was to be ascribed to an inordinate determination of the blood to the brain;

"A dagger of the mind, a false creation

"Proceeding from the heat-oppressed brain.

#### §. 96. *Appearance of Caesar's ghost to Brutus.*

Before the last battle on the plains of Philippi, a spectre somewhat larger, but not less distinct than the life, appeared to Marcus Junius Brutus;—the same spectre is said to have appeared to him once before. This incident, which is related by the early biographers of the patriotick Roman, is more recently taken notice of by Shakespeare also, in the play of Julius Caesar; he takes the liberty of a poet, however, in placing it before the death of Caesar.

Brutus is represented, as sitting in his tent late at night, and the only one awake. He is just taking up a book to read, when Caesar's unwelcome spirit enters.

"How ill this taper burns! Ha! Who comes here?"

"I think it is the weakness of mine eyes,

"That shapes this monstrous apparition.

"It comes upon me;—Art thou any thing?"

"Art thou some god, some angel, or some devil?"

The English dramatist well knew, whether the historical account of the incident were true or false, there was nothing impossible and perhaps not improbable in the circumstance, that Brutus should have been under the influence of that mental delusion, which is termed APPARITION; and have thus been led firmly to believe in the presence of the spectre.

In explanation of the spectre, which appeared to Brutus, there is to be considered,

(1) His bodily fatigue. Oppressed as he was with the principal cares of the army, we may well suppose, that his bodily system was in a measure worn down, and in such an unsettled and feverish state, as to detract not inconsiderably from the due and consistent exercise of the intellectual faculties.

(2) It is only a natural supposition also, that he was in great mental excitement, independent of any intellectual derangement arising from his great fatigue; foreseeing the misery, which would come upon himself, if he were defeated, on his family, and the whole Roman people, and remembering, in particular, that he had plunged the dagger into the bosom of his friend for freedom, and that the freedom, which he had thus sought, was likely to be lost.

Thus there was combined, with an over-wearied and feverish condition of the bodily system and the natural effects on the mind arising from this source, a strong and fearful mental agitation from other causes; and then it is to be remembered also;

(3) That, in the instance of which we are now speaking, it was the night before the battle, it was in its depth of stillness and darkness, and his lamp was burning dimly beside him.

. These circumstances, although we do not pretend to offer them as a full solution, justify us in the opinion, not that he had a dream, which some have supposed, but that his waking conception of the dead Caesar was so vivid, as to lead him to mistake the image for the reality.

It will be deemed pardonable, if I pass from this instance of antiquity, briefly to comment on a remark, which is to be found in one of those interesting little narratives, which detail the sufferings of the early settlers in our country when taken captive in the Indian wars. I allude to the narrative of the captivity of a Mrs. Howe and her seven children, who in 1775 were taken prisoners at Hinsdale in New Hampshire by a party of the St. Francois Indians. Once coming into the company of a number of savages, after having been absent from ~~them~~ some little time, she saw them smile at each other, and asked what was the matter? They replied, two of her children were no more, one having died a natural death, and the other being knocked on the head. "I did not utter many words, (says the mother,) but my heart was sorely pained within me, and my mind *exceedingly troubled with strange and awful ideas*. I often imagined for instance, that *I plainly saw* the naked carcasses of my children hanging upon the limbs of trees, as the Indians are wont to hang the raw hides of those beasts, which they take in hunting," &c.

It needs but a little reflection to assure one, that these conceptions or ideas were of that intensely vivid kind, which are here denominated *apparitions*, the mind being thrown into an unnatural and feverish posture by the great degree of mental and bodily suffering.

NOTE. The remarks in relation to Caesar's spectre may be applied also in explanation of the appearance of Banquo's ghost in the tragedy of Macbeth.

#### §. 96. *Confessions of an English opium-eater.*

There is a book entitled CONFESSIONS OF AN ENGLISH OPIUM-EATER; not without merit in point of style, but chiefly valuable for affording some facts in respect to the

mind. This person seems to have been naturally of a feeling and imaginative turn, and this intellectual vivacity was greatly increased by an inordinate use of opium ; so that in the end his intellect was thrown into an unnatural and disorderly posture. In the middle of eighteen hundred and seventeen, the faculty of forming apparitions, that is, as the terms are to be understood in his case, the power of painting all sorts of phantoms on the darkness, became so frequent and effective, as to be positively distressing to him. At night when he lay awake in bed, vast processions passed along in mournful pomp ; friezes of never-ending stories, that to his feelings were sad and solemn, he informs us, as if they were stories drawn from times before Oedipus or Priam, before Tyre, before Memphis. Whenever the night shades had fallen, whatever he happened to think upon, whether it were landscapes, or palaces, or armies in battle array, in a word, whatever was a subject of thought, and was capable of being visually represented, formed themselves into phantoms of the eye and swept before him in order and in distinctness, no less marked and imposing, than if the real objects themselves had been present.

This was a state of mind, without doubt, in many respects, similar to that which framed the spectre of Cæsar, the imaginary sword of Macbeth, and suspended before the bewildered sight of the American captive the bodies of her lifeless children.

#### §. 97. *Of temporary mental excitements.*

Very much resembling the states of mind, which have been mentioned, and differing in degree rather than in any other respect, are certain temporary mental excitements, to which literary men, especially those of a vivid and powerful genius, have been too much subject.

The late lamented Professor Fisher of New-Haven has made a statement on this point, drawn from his own experience, as follows ;

“To whatever subject I happened to direct my thoughts,

my mind was crowded with ideas upon it. I seemed to myself able to wield the most difficult subjects with perfect ease, and to have an entire command over my own train of thought. I found myself wonderfully inventive ; scarce a subject presented itself, in which I did not seem to myself to perceive, as it were by intuition, important improvements. I slept but a part of the night, my mind being intensely occupied with planning, inventing, &c. All the writing that I did was done in the utmost hurry. Ideas crowded upon me five times as fast as I could put down even hints of them, and my sole object was to have some memorial by which they might be recalled. I was employed the whole time in the most intense meditation ; at the same time, thinking never seemed to me to be attended with so little effort. I did not experience the least confusion or fatigue of mind. My thoughts flowed with a rapidity that was prodigious, and the faculties of association, memory, &c. were wonderfully raised. I could read different languages into English, and English into Hebrew, with a fluency which I was never before or since master of. During the whole time, though I was in a low state of health, I never felt the least pain or fatigue of body."

Instances of this sort are not unfrequent, but we have selected from many others, that which has been given, as coming from a source entitled to more than ordinary credit.

On these temporary mental excitements the following remarks are suggested ;

(1) They are not the action of a healthy and well-balanced state of mind, but are rather indicative that it is diseased, and happen in consequence of such disease. They are sometimes accounted moments of inspiration, but it would be happier for the subject of them, if he were led to regard them, as seasons of intellectual malady.

(2) They are generally followed by a depression, which corresponds to the more than ordinary, previous excitement. That energy of conception and strength of combination, which a little while before were perhaps recog-

nised with emotions of pride, are followed by extreme prostration and inertness ;—so that, if it could be proved, that the previous state of the mind were not a diseased one, no benefit could justly be considered, as having resulted from its occurrence.

It is of great practical consequence to many, especially to persons of studious habits, to pay attention to these remarks. If they find themselves the subjects of such mental excitements, as have been described, they will be led to regard them, if they consider these views well founded, as the indications of mental disease. They should, therefore, seek some remedy. The influence of the body over the mind, as already seen, is very great, and the unnatural exercises of the mind may, in this very instance, be traced to the connection, existing between them. If this should be found to be true, the first thing to be attended to, would be a restoration of the physical system.

It may be briefly remarked in this connection, that, in general, a healthy and vigorous state of the body is necessary to a healthy and vigorous mental action.

#### §. 98. *State of the mind in drowning.*

It has been remarked, in a number of instances, by persons, who have been on the point of drowning, but have been rescued from that situation and have survived, that the operations of their minds were peculiarly quickened. There was such wonderful activity of the mental principle, that the whole past life, with its thousand, minute incidents, has simultaneously passed before them, and been viewed, as in a mirror. Scenes, and situations, long gone by, and associates, not seen for years and perhaps buried, came rushing in upon the field of intellectual vision, in all the activity and distinctness of real existence.

In a moment of time, when the soul was on the point of starting away from the body forever, millions of actions, millions of thoughts, uncounted multitudes of feelings have, in this way, appeared to pass in review.

In how many instances, compared with the whole num-



ber of persons rescued from the waters, when on the point of yielding up their life, this peculiar state of mind may have existed, it is not in our power to say;—that it has existed in some cases of this sort there is no doubt.

Here, then, is an instance of greatly increased mental action, in some respects analagous, undoubtedly, to other instances, brought up in this chapter, but of which our information is as yet too limited and conjectural, to furnish a satisfactory solution.

A remark may be made here in reference to the final judgment. The doctrine of the Scriptures on that most interesting subject, is, that we shall be judged, and the retribution will be awarded according to the deeds done in the body, whether good or evil. But it is difficult for us to harbour the belief, that God will pass judgment on his creatures, and they not be enabled clearly to understand the rectitude of his decisions. And still less easy is it for us to conceive, how there can thus be a conviction of his rectitude without a distinct recollection of the actions of the past life.

The fact, which has now been mentioned, and others, which are related in different parts of this chapter, do not permit us to doubt, that it is in the power of our Creator to quicken our mental capabilities, without the laws, which ordinarily govern them, being, in the least, altered from their present state, so that the numberless multitude, assembled at the judgment seat, shall, in a single instant, view the perfect PANORAMA of their past life, in all the variety and in all the minuteness of its circumstances.

This remark is worthy the consideration of those, who object to a general judgment on the ground, that the actions of the past life cannot possibly be recalled, in all their extent, to the person, who has committed them.

#### §. 99. *Of the apparitions of Nicolai.*

Nicolai was an inhabitant of Berlin, a celebrated bookseller, of a naturally very vivid imagination. He was neither ignorant nor superstitious; a fact, which some un-

doubtedly will esteem it important to know. The following account of the apparitions, which appeared to him, is given in his own words.

"My wife and another person came into my apartment in the morning, in order to console me, but I was too much agitated by a series of incidents, which had most powerfully affected my moral feeling, to be capable of attending to them. On a sudden, I perceived, at about the distance of ten steps, a form like that of a deceased person. I pointed at it, asking my wife if she did not see it? It was but natural that she should not see any thing; my question, therefore, alarmed her very much, and she immediately sent for a physician. The phantom continued about eight minutes. I grew at length more calm, and being extremely exhausted, fell into a restless sleep, which lasted about half an hour. The physician ascribed the apparition to a violent mental emotion, and hoped there would be no return; but the violent agitation of my mind had in some way disordered my nerves, and produced further consequences which deserve a more minute description.

"At four in the afternoon, the form which I had seen in the morning re-appeared. I was by myself when this happened, and being rather uneasy at the incident, went to my wife's apartment, but there likewise I was persecuted by the apparition, which, however, at intervals disappeared, and always presented itself in a standing posture. About six o'clock there appeared also several walking figures, which had no connection with the first. After the first day the form of the deceased person no more appeared, but its place was supplied with many other phantasms, sometimes representing acquaintances, but mostly strangers; those whom I knew were composed of living and deceased persons, but the number of the latter was comparatively small. I observed the persons with whom I daily conversed did not appear as phantasms, these representing chiefly persons who lived at some distance from me.

"These phantasms seemed equally clear and distinct at all times, and under all circumstances, both when I was by myself, and when I was in company, and as well in the day as

at night, and in my own house as well as abroad ; they were, however, less frequent when I was in the house of a friend, and rarely appeared to me in the street. When I shut my eyes, these phantasms would sometimes vanish entirely, though there were instances when I beheld them with my eyes closed, yet, when they disappeared on such occasions, they generally returned when I opened my eyes. I conversed sometimes with my physician and my wife of the phantasms which at the moment surrounded me ; they appeared more frequently walking than at rest, nor were they constantly present. They frequently did not come for some time, but always re-appeared for a longer or shorter period, either singly or in company, the latter, however, being most frequently the case. I generally saw human forms of both sexes, but they usually seemed not to take the smallest notice of each other, moving as in a market-place, where all are eager to press through the crowd ; at times, however, they seemed to be transacting business with each other. I also saw several times people on horse-back, dogs and birds. All these phantasms appeared to me in their natural size, and as distinct as if alive, exhibiting different shades of carnation in the uncovered parts, as well as different colours and fashions in their dresses, though the colours seemed somewhat paler than in real nature. None of the figures appeared particularly terrible, comical, or disgusting, most of them being of an indifferent shape, and some presenting a pleasing aspect. The longer these phantoms continued to visit me, the more frequently did they return, while, at the same time, they increased in number about four weeks after they had first appeared. I also began to hear them talk ; these phantoms sometimes conversed among themselves, but more frequently addressed their discourse to me ; their speeches were commonly short, and never of an unpleasant turn. At different times there appeared to me both dear and sensible friends of both sexes, whose addresses tended to appease my grief, which had not yet wholly subsided : their consolatory speeches were in general addressed to me when I was alone. Sometimes, however, I was accosted

by these consoling friends while I was engaged in company, and not unfrequently while real persons were speaking to me. These consolatory addresses consisted sometimes of abrupt phrases, and at other times they were regularly executed."

As Nicolai was a person of information and of a philosophical spirit, he was able to detect and to assign the true cause of his mental malady.

He was, it is to be remembered, in the first place, a person of a very vivid fancy, and, hence, his mind was the more likely to be affected by any disease of the body. A number of years before the occurrences above related, he had been subject to a violent vertigo, which had been cured by means of leeches; it was his custom to lose blood twice a year, but previously to the present attack, this evacuation had been neglected. Supposing, therefore, that the mental disorder might arise from an irregularity in the circulation of the blood, he again resorted to the application of leeches.

When the leeches were applied, no person was with him besides the surgeon; but during the operation his chamber was crowded with human phantasms of all descriptions. In the course of a few hours, however, they moved around the chamber more slowly; their colour began to fade, until growing more and more obscure, they at last dissolved into air, and he ceased to be troubled with them afterwards.

§. 100, *Instance similar to the preceding.*

There is an instance, very similar to that of Nicolai, in the sixth volume of the Edinburgh Medical and Surgical Journal; particulars, however, it is unnecessary minutely to repeat.

A shopkeeper of Edinburgh was haunted with apparitions, appearing not only at night, but in the day time; so much so that, at one time, he was unable to tell which were his real customers, and which were phantoms of the imagination.

The visionary beings, that appeared to him to enter

and leave his shop, were as distinctly marked, were apparently as full of life and intelligence, as the persons, who were really present.

The complaint in this instance was cured by medical prescriptions, in particular, as in the case of the Berlin bookseller, by letting of blood by means of leeches.

For other instances the reader is referred to a popular work recently published, entitled,

"Sketches of the Philosophy of Apparitions; or, an Attempt to trace such Illusions to their Physical Causes by Samuel Hibbert, M. D."

The author treats of spectral illusions, resulting from highly excited states of particular temperament, from a general nervous irritability of the system, from hystericks, from neglect of accustomed, periodical blood-letting, from febrile and inflammatory affections, hypochondriasis, &c.

It is sufficiently clear from this work, that, in many cases of apparitions, the cause is undoubtedly to be sought, as in the instances, which have been last mentioned, in the disordered condition of the bodily system; the consequence of which is a disordered state of the mind.

#### §. 101. *Of the second sight of the Scotch Highlanders.*

Much has been said, although more formerly than in latter days, of the SECOND SIGHT of the Highlanders in Scotland; a faculty, called, in the Erse language, *Taisch*;—and if it be considered a subject at all worthy of attention, it is proper to remark upon it, in connection with the ideas brought up in this chapter.

SECOND SIGHT is the power of visually beholding objects, which are not present, and which, therefore, are not naturally and in the ordinary way, objects of vision.

Take the following illustrations. A man on his journey, and far from home, is thrown from his horse; a person, who is his neighbour, but has the power of second sight, sees him bleeding on the ground, although at the distance of a considerable number of miles, and, it may be,

not without a perception, more or less vivid, of the outlines of the place, where the accident happened. Again; a person, having this power, may be expected at some fit time to see a funeral procession, with such attendant circumstances, as are judged to point out some individual in the neighbourhood, whose lot it will be soon to leave the world.

Perceptions of this sort are not limited to any particular objects, but all things existing and all states of action and suffering may be thus seen, and such consequences are deduced and predicted, as the circumstances of the particular case seem to warrant.

There was a treatise on this subject, published in the year 1762, in which many incidents were related of persons, whom the writer believed to have possessed this extraordinary power, but the incautious credulity, which he manifested, was such, as to prevent implicit confidence being placed in his details.

After looking at the subject with the aid of such statements as have reached these regions so remote from the soil, where this power is supposed to have been peculiarly exercised, this seems to be a reasonable result, viz.

That the Highlanders of Scotland possessed, and undoubtedly do still possess, the second sight, which is more or less prevalent in all countries, and nothing more;—viz. that of APPARITIONS, or, in other words, of conceptions, rendered so vivid by circumstances, either mental, physical, or a combination of both, as to appear realities.

There may be reason, however, for supposing, that apparitions were more frequent among them, than is common elsewhere, but we are able to allude, and that briefly, only to one of the circumstances, which are considered as justifying the supposition.

It has been remarked with truth, that the high-lands of Scotland are a picturesque, but a melancholy country. The narrow vallies are but thinly inhabited; they resound with waterfalls and are overhung with precipices; and further upward are mountainous deserts, covered with the brown heath and dark with mists.

People, inhabiting such a land, will be likely to have strong and lofty feelings, apparently partaking of the wildness and darkness of their situation. If they are ignorant they can hardly fail to be superstitious, as strength of feeling, when not guided by information, has been found very generally to incline that way;—and if they are too well informed for superstition, they will discover an inclination to melancholy, superinduced, as one may say, by the gloomy, but exalting sublimity of those works of nature, which constantly surround them.

Their conceptions, therefore, will be extremely vivid; and it will excite no wonder, if a larger number of persons, than is common in less romantick countries, should be found, whose conceptions are so strongly aroused, as to become APPARITIONS.

§. 102. *Of ghosts and other spectral appearances.*

GHOSTS are partly APPARITIONS, taking that term, as it has been illustrated, and in part mental illusions, arising from not viewing objects aright. In respect to ghosts, remark,

(1) That they are seen most frequently in the dark, hardly any one pretending to have seen them in the day time. And this is a circumstance altogether in favour of the idea, that they are in all cases, although they cannot all be referred to one cause, deceptions practised on the imagination. In the dark, as we are exposed to a greater variety of dangers than at other times, our feelings are in consequence excited in a greater or less degree, and, as there is a great dimness in the outlines of objects, they readily assume, when viewed by the mind under such circumstances, new and various shapes.

Let it be observed, as another circumstance attending these spectral appearances,

(2) That ghosts are seen most frequently among people of very little mental cultivation, among the ignorant. Uninstructed minds are generally the most credulous. If there were truly any beings in nature of this sort, and they

were any thing more than imaginary appearances, persons who were well-informed and philosophick, would stand a chance, equally good with others, of forming an acquaintance with them.

From these two circumstances it seems to follow clearly, that many of these imaginary beings are the creations of a credulous and excited mind, viewing objects at an hour, when their outlines cannot be distinctly seen.

It is to be remarked further,

(3) Ghosts, whenever they present themselves, are found to agree very nearly with certain previous conceptions, which persons have formed in respect to them. If, for instance, the ghost be the spirit of one, with whom we have been particularly acquainted, he appears with the same lineaments, although a little paler, and the same dress even to the button on his coat; the dress, in general, however, is white, corresponding to the colour of the burial habiliments;—so that they may be said to have a personal or individual, a generick, and, as some have maintained, a national character.

“They commonly appear, (says Grose, who has written on this subject,) in the same dress, they wore while living; though they are sometimes clothed all in white; but that is chiefly the churchyard ghosts, who have no particular business, but seem to appear *PRO BONO PUBLICO*, or to scare drunken rusticks from tumbling over their graves. Dragging chains is not the fashion of English ghosts, chains and black vestments being chiefly the accoutrements of foreign spectres seen in arbitrary governments;—Dead or alive, English spirits are free.”

This circumstance also remains to be considered;

(4) When spirits have come from the dead to the living, it has generally been found, that these visitants were among the particular friends, although sometimes of the enemies of those, whom they came to see. This is very natural.

It is our friends and enemies, whom we think most of; much more than of those, to whom we are unknown, and towards whom our feelings are indifferent.



A person has lost a very near friend by death ; his soul is distressed, and amid the joys of life, which have now lost their charms, and amid its cares, to which he turns with a broken heart, he incessantly recalls the image so endeared to him. What wonder then, that his imagination, which, in the light and bustle of the day, was able to keep before itself the picture of the departed, should, in the stillness and shades of midnight, when remembrances multiply and feelings grow deeper and deeper, increase that picture to the size and give to it the vivid form of real life !

These circumstances justify us in ascribing the existence of that supposed class of beings, called ghosts, to the two causes, mentioned at the head of this section, viz. conceptions rendered inordinately intense, and objects, actually seen, but under such circumstances, as to be misrepresented.

#### §. 103. *Of the apparitions of the religious.*

Individuals, under great religious excitement, frequently make mention of having seen apparitions. One has beheld angels, ascending to heaven, or descending on the ladder of Jacob ; bright companies, singing the song of Moses and the Lamb ; and the river of the water of life, clear as chrystal.

Another has seen the Saviour in the most trying moments of the crucifixion ; and has no more doubt of having truly and visually beheld Him, than the disciple, Thomas, when he thrust his hand into his side.

This subject, is one of a delicate nature, and on which we are greatly liable to be misunderstood. Knowing this, we shall decline either asserting or denying, that christians *may* see, and *have* seen angels, heaven opened, the Saviour, and the like ; since any thing we have in view, in the present section, does not require such assertion or denial.

But this proposition may probably be laid down without exciting opposition from any quarter ;—That it is dan-

gerous to rest one's hopes of a religious character on these visions. And without rudely setting at defiance the feelings and opinions, existing on this subject, we would inquire, Whether they cannot very often, as in instances already remarked upon, be traced to some disorder of the physical system? or, admitting, that the body is sound and under no special excitement, whether they may not be merely our own thoughts, strengthened by reflection, rendered intense by desire?

"Alas! we listen to our own fond hopes,  
 "Even till they seem no more our fancy's children,  
 "We put them on a prophet's robe, endow them  
 "With prophet's voices, and then Heaven speaks in them,  
 "And that, which we would have be, surely shall be."

The salvation of the soul is too weighty a concern to be risked on such an uncertain foundation; especially as we have the Word of life, which points out the marks of a gracious state, yet without making mention of dreams, visions, or apparitions, as included among those marks.

NOTE. In the London Quarterly of April, 1822, in an article on Nervous Affections, are some remarks on Emanuel Swedenborg. Whether they be philosophical and just, or not, the reader can judge;—they are, at least, written with more temper and candour, than some of the criticisms on the life and writings of the individual, who is the subject of them.

"We have been looking over the life and writings of Emanuel Swedenborg, and the conclusion to which we come is this:—that if allowance is made, first, for a credulous and fanciful intellect, (there is among sane men an infinite variety in the susceptibility of belief,) and, secondly, for the use of allegorical instead of common language—if we had him alive, could catechise and cross-examine him about his statements, separate what was mere allegorical jargon, and what was mere matter of opinion, and get his actual experiences in plain language, much, if not all the mystery would vanish, without resorting to insanity for an explanation. In the present age, philosophers credit nothing but what they perceive by sense, receive on satisfac-

tory evidence, or infer by strict reason ; all notions, suggested by other impulses, they view with doubt or disbelief. Wieland, in his Agathodamon, conjectures, that in the infancy of the human race, men did, as children do now, confound their past dreams with real occurrences ; that when they had been dreaming of a dead friend, they would think that they had been with him, and that thus has arisen the belief in ghosts. Berkeley was of opinion that the reality of things consisted not in their outward existence, but in being perceived. It is a common belief with religious enthusiasts that strong inclination is divine impulse. Now if from natural facility of conviction, or from religious hypothesis, Swendenborg believed that meditation carried to a certain intensity was reality, how easy for him to sit in his arm-chair, shoot his soul into Heaven ; wander through its streets and squares ; behold its lofty buildings and splendid palaces, roofed with gold and floored with precious stones, converse with its inhabitants dressed in white, or shining, or flame coloured garments, and walk under trees with silver leaves, golden fruit, and rainbow flowers !"

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## CHAPTER TENTH.

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### ORIGIN OF SIGNS OF THOUGHT.

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§. 104. *Our mental operations are to be made known.*

It seems to be clearly the intention of Providence, that there should be a communication of thoughts from one to another. Without such an ability of making our thoughts known, there would be but little force in the remark of one of the philosophick ancients, the truth of which is so generally granted, that we are born not for ourselves alone, but that our friends and country have a share in us.

There is, then, some way of reciprocal intercourse among the souls of men ; hearts can meet each other in the

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salutations of friendship ; minds can grapple in the trial of their strength ; there are desires and aversions to be made known, hopes and fears, doubts and determinations, perceptions, imaginations, reasonings.

Admitting the truth of this representation, the mode of communicating these things, as well as the various thoughts and feelings themselves, becomes an interesting subject of inquiry. It is interesting, because the signs of thought, whatever they may be, exercise a considerable influence over those mental operations, of which they are representative, and also because it is of the utmost consequence to the well-being and prosperity of mankind, that there should be as much readiness and exactness as possible in those mental communications, which by means of signs are constantly taking place.

In this chapter, however, we are to inquire particularly into signs of thought, where alphabetick characters and oral speech may be supposed to be unknown, to observe upon that way of making communications, which was earliest used and upon others, as they successively follow ; reserving to the following chapter a variety of speculative and practical remarks on the use of words, which is the sign or representative of thought, with which, at the present day, we have most to do.

§. 105. *Thoughts first expressed by gestures and the countenance.*

Separate an individual in very early life from the rest of the human family, and let him grow up without any instruction in the use of the organs of speech, and it will be found, that he will be entirely ignorant in what way to employ them, except it be to utter a few inarticulate cries.

The story of the wild girl, found near the French village of Songi in 1731, also of a boy, found in the forests of Lithuania in 1695, who is particularly mentioned in Part First of Condillac's book on the Origin of Knowledge, and other instances similar, are a proof of what has been said.

Whether God did, or did not, directly teach our first

parents alphabetical, oral language, (a question, which has been long disputed,) it is certain, that, in these instances, we find persons, who could not avail themselves of that mode of communicating their ideas;—the same is true of persons, who are born deaf and dumb, and have not been instructed in any artificial method of making their thoughts known. Such persons, not being able to express their ideas by means of arbitrary signs, avail themselves, to the best of their power, of the language of nature.

And now the question is, when they are thus limited, what is the means, which they first employ? The answer, in reference to such an inquiry, is, that they make use of gestures and expressions of the countenance.

The following illustrations may be given.

The flushed countenance and the uplifted hand denote an emotion of rage within;—a look, slightly illuminated with a smile, with none or but a small motion of the body, is an indication of satisfaction and peace. In dejection and melancholy, the head sinks, the arms depend; while admiration and surprise elevate the arms, throw the body back, and fix it, seemingly immovable, in one position.

Two savages of different tribes accidentally meet together, totally unacquainted with each other's language;—they are hungry, or athirst, or wounded in battle, or from some other cause in suffering. By means of such gestures merely and such expressions of countenance, as have been mentioned, how many thoughts and feelings will they be able reciprocally to communicate!

#### §. 106. *Of the art of Pantomime among the Romans.*

IN PANTOMIME thoughts are exhibited by gesture and the countenance merely, without words. The Romans had three collections of gestures, one for tragedy, another for comedy, and a third for those satirical poems, which were thought to be suited for publick exhibitions. There were actors in pantomime, such as Pylæus and Battellus, who made it their whole business, to address the people

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in this sort of dumb show, and they succeeded to a degree, which at the present day is quite astonishing.

It was before systems of gestures were fully agreed upon, as signs of thought, and pantomime had gotten to be an art, that the contest between Cicero and Roscius, which has been so often mentioned, took place. Cicero pronounced a period, which he had composed; Roscius followed and gave the meaning in action; Cicero varied his expressions, and Roscius as readily varied his gestures. And whether Cicero with words could convey the meaning with more exactness and emphasis, than Roscius could without them, has been made a question.

It may be more particularly noticed here, that gesture is the natural language of the deaf and dumb. It was remarked by a person, that, in travelling in one of the United States, he once stopped at a house, where were three sisters, all deaf and dumb; two of them grown up, the other about six years of age. They had received no instruction, but they were, nevertheless, able to express very many ideas, far more than one might at first suppose, by means of action or gesture. But it was not merely that limited degree of action, which the violence of feeling seems instinctively and naturally to prompt; they had, in some way, agreed upon a numerous catalogue of signs of this sort, and employed them with remarkable expertness. They thus made out to converse with each other, and with those of their acquaintances, who had succeeded in learning their vocabulary of action.

Although the signs in this instance were in some measure conventional, because reciprocally agreed upon, they did not hit upon them of themselves, but they were suggested by what they observed in the daily employments of their fellow beings. For instance, a motion of the arm, slightly declining from the horizontal, was their sign for a scythe and for mowing. A motion, similar to that of a person cutting wood, was their sign for an axe and for cutting. Their sign for a book was the laying of the palms of the hands together and then opening them, as one opens a book, &c.

The earliest mode of expressing thoughts, then, was by gesture or action, and by expressions of the countenance.

§. 107. *Thoughts expressed by symbolick actions.*

The next mode of expressing thoughts, resorted to by those, who have not arbitrary signs, is symbolick action. This seems to be only the language of gesticulation, carried to a greater extent; and will, therefore, be most likely to be frequently employed among nations of little mental culture, and in oriental countries more frequently than in others, owing to the greater vivacity of the people. We, accordingly, find instances of this mode of expressing thought among all savage tribes, and those, who are familiar with the Bible, know, how very frequently it was employed among the Hebrews.

As far as uncivilized nations are concerned, it is well known, that, when a citizen of this country or of the Canadas makes a visit to an Indian tribe, with which his own people is not in a state of hostility, he is expected, and, in consequence of that expectation, deems it expedient, if not necessary, to carry in his hand a large pipe, formed of clay or marble, and adorned with feathers, which is called the calumet of peace. And this is a symbol, more expressive to the savage mind, than would be the utterance of the same thing in words, that his visitant cherishes sentiments of amity and good will.

Further;—when any of the North American savages form a treaty with any other tribe or nation, they employ, as a symbol of certain feelings and determinations, the belt of wampum, composed of shells of different colours, but generally black and white, and wrought into the shape of beads. The beads are perforated and strung upon a thong, and several of these thongs, united together, constitute a belt. One party to the treaty holds one end of the belt, the other party holds the other;—a symbolical action, by which the savages understand the sincere and reciprocal confirmation of the stipulations of the treaty.

Such symbolick actions were frequent also, as intimated above, among the Hebrews. It will be enough, in illustration of this remark, merely to allude to the following instances, which may be more fully understood by a reference to the Scriptures.

Elisha directs Joash to shoot arrows out of a window eastward. Jeremiah, acting under divine direction, hides the linen girdle in the hole of a rock near Euphrates;—he breaks a potter's vessel in the sight of the people;—he puts on bonds and yokes, and casts a book into Euphrates. Ezekiel weighs his beard, delineates the siege of Jerusalem on a tile, &c.

§. 108. *Objections to the symbolick language of scripture.*

It has been sometimes thought, that the symbolick actions, mentioned in the preceding section, were below the dignity of the prophetick office. They have, indeed, by opposers of the Bible, been charged with nothing less than meanness, absurdity, fanaticism. A short-sighted conclusion this.

It ought to be remembered, that it was the spirit of the times, the feeling of the people themselves, which dictated those actions; and if with good reason we speak of the spirit of the age in regard to every generation of men, it is absurd and fanatical in us to set up the feelings and practices of our own period, to guide us in the estimation of the actions of individuals in all the ages preceding.

The people undoubtedly well understood the meaning, when Ezekiel weighed the hair of his beard in balances and delineated the siege of Jerusalem on a tile;—and the action was no more considered foolish and improper, than very many gesticulations are so considered by us, which we every day witness, without any sense of incongruity or any emotions of surprise.

§. 109. *Of pictorial delineations as signs of thought.*

We next consider those pictured delineations, which



are meant to convey ideas by means of visible sketches of actions and events precisely, as they exist. These delineations are made sometimes in painting, sometimes in embroidered work, and in other ways.

The expression of ideas in this method has been more or less practised in all nations during the early periods of their history, and has been of considerable aid to them in making out the record of their early annals. We are informed in the Pentateuch, that figures were embroidered in the curtains of the HOLY OF HOLIES; and learn from the ancient poems of Homer, that Helen wrought in embroidery the pictures of the battles, in which the ill-fated attractions of her own person had caused the Greeks and Romans to be engaged. We find some evidence of the existence of this mode of expressing and transmitting ideas among the Persians, Phenicians, Egyptians, Scandinavians, as well as among the Greeks and Hebrews;—although, as may well be supposed, when we ascend to a period so far back, as to have rendered this imperfect mode of expressing thoughts necessary, historical information becomes, in general, scanty and doubtful.

The expression of ideas by painting in colours, or by pictorial writing in other ways, was found to exist among the savages of North America. Bows and arrows, hatchets, animals of various kinds were imprinted on the bodies of their chiefs, the indications of their calling and of their heroick qualities.

A recent and somewhat striking illustration of this topick cannot well be omitted. In Schoolcraft's Journal of Travels through the north-western regions of the United States, we are told that the party, in passing across from the river St. Louis, to Sandy Lake, had, with their Indian attendants, gotten out of the way, and could not tell, where they were. In consequence of being in this situation, the Indians, not knowing what might be the result, determined to leave at a certain place, a memorial of their journey for the information of such of their tribe, as might happen to come in that direction afterwards. In the party there was a military officer, a person whom the

Indians understood to be an attorney, and a mineralogist; eight were armed; when they halted, they formed three encampments. The savages went to work and traced out with their knives upon a piece of birch bark a man with a sword for the officer, another human figure with a book in his hand for the lawyer, and a third with a hammer for the mineralogist; three ascending columns of smoke denoted the three encampments, and eight muskets, the number of armed men, &c.

We find pictorial delineations to have been practised, in particular, among the original inhabitants of Mexico. It is related by historians, that when the Spaniards first landed upon that coast, the natives despatched messengers to the king, Montezuma, with a representation, painted on cloth, of the landing and appearance of the Europeans. The events and appearances, which they wished to describe, were new to them, and these pictured representations were the methods, which they adopted, in preference to any other, to express those ideas which they deemed it important the king should immediately possess.

Pictures, as well as gestures, are a very imperfect mode of communicating ideas, as they must, from their very nature, be limited, in a great degree, to the description of external events. They fail in disclosing the connections of those events, in developing dispositions, intricate trains of thoughts, and, in some measure, the passions.

#### §. 110. *Of hieroglyphical writing.*

**HIEROGLYPHICKS**, (from the Greek words, **HIEROS**, sacred, and **GLYPHO**, to carve,) are figures, sometimes painted, or embroidered, and at others, carved out; used to express ideas. They differ from pictorial writing, chiefly, in being an abridgment of it, and also in this particular, that they select, by the aid of analogies more or less remote, figures for the purpose of expressing the less obvious mental emotions and abstract truths.

Hieroglyphicks were employed much more among the Egyptians than elsewhere, and the whole art probably arose

in this way. The method of communicating thoughts by means of paintings, as among the Mexicans, and which, undoubtedly, existed among the Egyptians, previous to the invention of Hieroglyphicks, was found inconvenient. The work was difficult in the execution, and bulky when it was completed; and there was, accordingly, very soon an attempt at the abridgment of that method.

Thus, the head might be used to designate a man; two or more hands with weapons opposed, a battle; a scaling ladder, set against a wall, a siege; a leafless tree, the winter. But when those, who depended upon this mode of expressing their thoughts, came to certain classes of the passions, the moral qualities, and a variety of abstract truths, they were under the necessity of finding out certain sensible objects, which bore or were supposed to bear some resemblance to such ideas, and, consequently, to go further in such instances, than a mere abridgment of pictorial delineations.

The eye was selected, in reference to such analogies, to signify wisdom; ingratitude was expressed by a viper, biting the hand, that gave it food; courage, by a lion; imprudence, by a fly; cunning, by a serpent.

On the temple of Minerva at Sais, there were the following hieroglyphical characters, an infant, an old man, a hawk, a fish, and a river horse, expressing this moral idea; ALL YOU, WHO COME INTO THE WORLD, AND GO OUT OF IT, KNOW THIS, THAT IMPUDENCE IS HATEFUL; a plain and practical truth, quite worthy to be read and understood by the people.

As the number of ideas among the people increased, and became more and more abstract, greater ingenuity was required in the invention of hieroglyphical characters to express them. Thus; a winged globe, with a serpent issuing from it, came to denote the universe, or universal nature.

The opinion has been often expressed, that the knowledge, wrapt up in the hieroglyphical characters of the Egyptians, and which embraced history, laws, and civil polity, was limited wholly to the priests, and that the com-

mon people were made acquainted with it, only as they received it from the priests. This might from some causes have been the fact ultimately ; but probably hieroglyphicks were at first designed not more for the priests than for the people, not to conceal knowledge, but to preserve and to communicate it.

We come now briefly to consider the written characters of the Chinese.

§. 111. *Of the written characters of the Chinese.*

It is a peculiarity of the Chinese language, that it employs CHARACTERS, i. e., artificial and arbitrary delineations, to express ideas, instead of words. Thus, for the idea, expressed by the English word, PRISONER, we have this delineation, which is less complicated than many others, viz. a figure, approaching in its form to a square with another figure nearly in the shape of an equilateral triangle, placed in the centre of it. The character, which, as it is articulated, is EUL, and answers to the English word, EAR, is somewhat in the shape of a PARALLELOGRAM, crossed at nearly equal distances from the ends by lines, drawn at right angles to the sides.

As every separate idea must have a distinct, separate character, standing for it, they are of course numerous. The elaborate Chinese work, called by way of distinction, THE GREAT DICTIONARY, contains sixty thousand of them ; although an acquaintance with a far less number, it is supposed, with no more than two thousand, will enable one to read, that number being found sufficient for the understanding of treatises on common topics and for the ordinary transactions of business.

§. 112. *The Chinese character an improvement on the hieroglyphical.*

As hieroglyphicks are an improvement on the mode of expressing ideas by painting, the characters employed by the Chinese may with good reason be considered the next

step in advance of hieroglyphicks. It is a proof of this, that many of the characters, particularly those called elementary, bore originally an analogy or resemblance to the objects, for which they stand. They were of course anciently hieroglyphicks, although now arbitrary characters. The fact, on which this conclusion is founded, is ascertained by consulting ancient inscriptions on cups of serpentine stone, on vases of porcelain, on seals of agate, and the characters used in editions of very ancient books. The characters, which at present stand for the sun, moon, a field, and the mouth, are quite arbitrary, and we discover no analogy between them and the object; but it was otherwise at first.

The sun was originally represented by a circle with a dot in the centre; the moon, by the segment of a circle; a field by a figure resembling a square, set off into smaller divisions by two lines intersecting each other at right angles in the centre; a mouth by a figure, intended to resemble the projection of the lips.

The Chinese character, then, may be considered to be the connecting link between hieroglyphicks and alphabetical languages. And its comparative value, as a means of expressing thought, seems to be indicated by the place, which it holds, viz. greater than that of the purely hieroglyphical system, and less than that of the languages, formed of alphabets.

*Note.*—The progress of the system of the Chinese from a hieroglyphical to a purely arbitrary character may be illustrated by the following story.

A tavern-keeper in Hungary, unable to write, kept account of the sums due to him by strokes chalked on his door; to each series of strokes was annexed a figure to denote the customer, to whom they applied. The soldier was represented by the figure of a musket; the carpenter by a saw, the smith by a hammer. In a short time for convenience, the musket was reduced to a straight line, the saw to a zig-zag line, the hammer to a cross; and thus began to be formed a set of characters, gradually receding from the original figure. The resemblance might, at last, be entirely lost sight of, and the figures become mere arbitrary marks.

§. 113. *The invention of alphabetick language a subject of dispute.*

There is a great distance between the arbitrary characters of the Chinese, which are employed as the signs of ideas merely, and alphabetical language.—Nor is it very easy to see, how the latter could flow out of the former, or what reciprocal connection of any kind they possess. Indeed it has been strenuously contended by many persons, that no progress of the human mind whatever, as it went forward from its barbarous to its more enlightened conditions, could have arrived at this wonderful invention. They consider it the gift of God.

The arguments on both sides of the question, Whether alphabetick language be of human, or of divine origin, are numerous and ingenious. But as the nature of our design requires us to avoid, as much as possible, long discussions, this must be our apology for declining an inquiry, which is certainly interesting, and not unimportant. Of those, who maintain, that language is of divine origin are Warburton, Johnson, and Blair; of the opposite opinion are Richard Simon and Condillac, with others on both sides.

*Note.*—We subjoin in this note the remark, which may possibly be of use to future inquirers on the subject treated of in this chapter, that there was anciently among the Peruvians something like the arbitrary characters of the Chinese. That people early contrived the following method of expressing and preserving their thoughts, viz. by means of cords of different colours and by knots on these of various sizes and differently arranged.

Something similar seems to have been practised among a North American tribe of savages, the Osages; as appears from the journal of one of the missionaries among them under date of Aug. 8, 1825,

“Proposed to White Hair to assemble his people to hear preaching. He declined, alledging, that I gave him no tobacco. Sans Nerf said, it was bad to assemble the people; they did not understand well; but if I would tell what I had to say, he would tell it to the people. He then seated himself with his bundle of sticks, and I expressed to him twelve or fifteen ideas respecting God, his government, &c. For every idea he laid down a stick, which is his manner of writing. After I had finished, he asked various questions, soliciting further explanations, until he was satisfied. He then counted all his sticks and said, I understand it all.”

## CHAPTER ELEVENTH.

### USE OF WORDS.

#### §. 114. *Superiour excellence of alphabetical language.*

In whatever way we may have come by alphabetical language, whether God himself were directly its author, or whether he early raised up some happy inventor, whose remembrance is now passed away, it is truly, if we may be allowed a scriptural allusion, a price, put into our hands, for the getting of wisdom. The single circumstance, that it is fitted to be employed, as a sign both of things and of vocal sounds, renders it greatly superiour to the afore-mentioned modes of expressing thought, gestures, symbolick actions, hieroglyphicks, paintings, Chinese characters, or other methods, which may have been at any time used.

As mental exertions are intimately connected with those means, by which they become obvious or are made known to others, one proof, and by no means a small one, of the superiour excellence of this over other methods may be found in the intellectual degradation of Savages and even of the Chinese themselves, compared with the nations of Europe. To whatever other causes this difference may be ascribed, the superiority of the latter in the signs of thought, which they employ, is undoubtedly one cause.

It may be said of alphabetical language in one sense, that it not only expresses our ideas, but multiplies them; at least, the facility of expressing and communicating thought by means of it sets men upon renewed thinking, and the result is wider views, more correct principles, sounder policy; moral, civil, and scientific improvement.

#### §. 115. *Words are artificial and arbitrary signs.*

Words, whether we consider them, as written or spoken, for, as they are thus respectively considered, they form the

two general divisions of written and spoken language, are arbitrary and conventional. They are used, as the signs of ideas, not because there is any natural or inherent fitness in them for this purpose, but are thus employed by agreement or general consent. So that the emperor, Augustus, confessed with good reason, that, while the political and military movements of the world were under his direction, he had not power, of himself alone, to introduce a single, new word into the Latin tongue. If this statement were not correct, if words had any natural fitness for that purpose, for which they are employed, and were not conventional, there would be but one language; all nations would use the same words, instead of the English employing the word, WHITE; the Latin language, ALBUS; the French, BLANC; and the German, WEISS for the same thing, with a similar diversity in the expression of other ideas, and in other languages.

It ought to be observed, however, if we consider language, as it meets the ear instead of the eye, if we look at spoken, in distinction from written language, that there is a slight exception to this general view of its nature. We allude to a class of terms, of which the words, CRASH, TWANG, BUZZ, WHISTLE, SHRILL, RATTLE, may be mentioned as specimens. There is evidently some resemblance between these words, as they are enunciated by the voice, and the things, for which they stand; in other languages, some words, similar to these, that is, having a like relation to the things, for which they stand, are to be found.

So that in regard to this very limited class, when we consider them merely, as they come from the voice or are sounded, there may be said to be a natural fitness or adaptation in the words to the things, which they express: but with this exception, which is one of very limited extent, words are truly arbitrary and conventional signs.

§. 116. *Words at first few in number and limited to particular objects.*

In the infancy of the human race, men were without a



knowledge of the arts; they had no laws, but the dictates of conscience, no regularly instituted form of government; they lived under the open sky, except when they retreated from the storm or the sunshine to the shade of trees or the cooler recesses of caverns. Their ideas, therefore, were few; the articulate sounds, which either the active ingenuity of nature, or the special interference of Providence had taught them not only to frame, but to employ as the instituted signs of things, must have been few also; even more so, than their ideas.

The few names, which they were able thus early to employ, related solely to the objects, with which they were immediately and particularly conversant; they had a name for the tree, under which they sat at noon; for the cavern, to which they occasionally retired; for the fruit, which relieved their hunger; and for the running water, at which they slaked their thirst. Afterwards they were led to form general names, standing for a number of objects, and probably in the following manner.

§. 117. *Of the formation of general names or appellatives.*

Man, naturally possessed of too much activity of spirit, to rest satisfied with remaining in one place, or to quiet his curiosity with a small number of objects, engages in some new enterprise, explores new tracts of country, and thus enlarges his knowledge. In going from place to place, he necessarily meets again with those particular objects, with which he had formed such an intimate acquaintance in his first residence. He meets with other trees, with other animals, with other caves and fountains, which he at once perceives to be of the same kind with those, that have previously come under his observation.

The recurrence of these new objects instantly calls up the others. This happens by a law of his nature, which he cannot control;—and the recollection is the more intense, as, in the infancy of things, curiosity is more alive, and astonishment more readily and deeply felt. The ob-

jects, with which he had become first acquainted, could not be recalled without a remembrance, at the same time, of the names, which he had given them. As he perceives the objects, which he now beholds, to be the same in kind with those, which he first knew, he at once, and it might almost be said, by a natural impulse, concludes, that they have an equal right to the names with those, to which those names were first appropriated. He, therefore, exclaims, *a tree! a cave! a fountain!* whenever and wherever he meets them. And thus what was at first a particular term, and was employed to express only an individual, has its meaning extended, and comes in time to stand for a whole class of objects.

Such, there can hardly be a question, was the origin of general names; and the statement is not only agreeable to the natural course of things, but is indirectly confirmed by many incidents. When the Spaniards first arrived at a certain region, bordering on the gulph of Mexico, and found, that the soil was rich, the dwellings good, the people numerous; they cried out, it is another Spain, and after that it bore the name of New Spain. And Livy, in connection with the early history of Rome, relates concerning two Trojan chiefs, Antenor and Aeneas, that the places in Italy, where they respectively landed, were called by them Troy, probably from the perception of some slight resemblance in the appearance of the shore or of the interior country to the places of their previous residence;—so readily does the mind connect together things, which are remote, and seek for analogies between what is novel and what is familiar. And it is on this principle, that we so often find ourselves in this country giving names to the objects around us, in allusion to what exists in some other continent; calling a large river, another Thames, and lofty mountains, the American Alps.

§. 118. *The formation of appellatives the result of a feeling of resemblance.*

We discover, in the way which has been mentioned, the origin of appellatives or common names, (in treatises of

logick more commonly termed genera and species,) the formation of which has sometimes been considered a point of difficult solution. Taking the statement, in the last section, to be the true one, it follows, that there is, previous to the giving of the common name, a feeling or perception of resemblance, prevailing among those objects, to which the common name is applied.

If there had not, between the perception of the objects and the giving of the common name, been an intermediate feeling of resemblance, the primitive framers of language would have been as likely to have assigned the appellative to the cave and the mountain, or to any other things altogether dissimilar, as to those resembling objects, to which it was assigned.

When, therefore, those persons, who hold to the doctrine of the Nominalists, say, that all general ideas are but names, they appear to mistake;—there is something more than the mere name, viz., that feeling of resemblance, which has been mentioned, and which, although it is difficult to explain it, except it be by referring each one to his own intellectual experience, is clearly too important a circumstance to be hastily overlooked, and thrown out of the question.

§. 119. *Our earliest generalizations often incorrect.*

When man first opens his eye on nature, (and in the infancy of our race, he finds himself a novice, wherever he goes,) objects so numerous, so various in kind, so novel and interesting, crowd upon his attention; that, attempting to direct himself to all at the same time, he loses sight of their specific differences, and blends them together, more than a calm and accurate examination would justify. And hence our earliest classifications, the primitive genera and species, are often incorrectly made.

Subsequently, when knowledge has been in some measure amassed, and reasoning and observation have been brought to a greater maturity, these errors are attended to; individuals are rejected from species, where

they do not properly belong, and species from genera.

Logical writers give a different account of the origin of genera and species. We first separate (say they) the qualities, combined in the objects, which come under our observation, and where we are able to trace the same quality or a number of them in different objects, we rank those objects together as a species or genus, and give a common name. Thus, John is a man six feet high, and of a light complexion, but Peter is both short and swarthy, while the stranger, who is walking with them, is as tall as John, and his countenance not less dark than Peter's. Although there are some things, in which these three persons differ, we readily perceive, that there are other things, in which they agree, such as erect figure, speech, and reason; and to this general perception, notion, or feeling of resemblance, we give the name, MAN. And man thenceforth becomes the name of a species.

On this account of the origin of genera and species, given in books of logick, we briefly remark, that all scientifick classifications must be formed in this manner, by an examination and comparison of individuals. But then it is to be observed, that men generalize and form classes, before they are able to do it in an exact and scientifick manner. There is an imperfect generalization, which is prompted by nature, and which looks chiefly at resemblances, without minutely inquiring into the differences of objects. This comes first. Those corrections, which are made by resorting to the logical or scientifick method, come afterwards.

May further be consulted on this part of this chapter, Stewart's Elements, Vol. II. chap. II. sect. 4. with note K., Adam Smith's Considerations on the first formation of languages,—Brown's Philosophy of the mind, Lect. XLVI. XLVII.

§. 120. *Illustration of our first classifications from the savages of Watecoo.*

The English navigator, Cook, in going from New Zea-

land to the Friendly Islands, lighted on an island, called Watecoo.

"The inhabitants (he says) were afraid to come near our cows and horses, nor did they form the least conception of their nature. But the sheep and goats did not surpass the limits of their ideas, for they gave us to understand, they knew them to be *birds*."

Captain Cook informs us, that these people were acquainted with only three sorts of animals, viz. dogs, hogs, and birds.

Having never before seen any such animals as a cow or a horse, they beheld their great size and formidable aspect with admiration; filled with fear, they could not be induced to approach, and knew not what to call or to think of them. They noticed the goats and the sheep, and clearly saw, that they were different from the dogs and hogs, with which they had been acquainted. But how did it happen, that they called them *birds*?

There is no nation so rude and uncivilized, as not to have some few general terms, and how those general terms are formed, we have above explained. Having noticed a variety of birds in their waters and forests, the people of Watecoo had undoubtedly found it necessary before this period to assign some general name or appellative to the flying animal, expressive of those resemblances, which evidently pervaded the whole class. They called them, we will suppose, *BIRDS*. Knowing there was a great variety of them, and that they were of different sizes, they not unnaturally applied the same term to the sheep and goats of the English. They knew not but there might be some new class of birds, which they had not hitherto noticed; they saw no insuperable objection in the size of the sheep and goats; and their agility and power of climbing over rocks and steep ascents readily reminded them of the power of flying, which they might imagine those animals had not yet thought proper fully to exhibit.

But they could clearly have no thoughts of this kind of cows and horses; and as to hogs and dogs they had no proper term for them, having never known more than

one variety or class, and having never been led to suspect, that there were any others.

If any should be disposed to make strange of this classification of these untutored savages, a little reflection may perhaps diminish their admiration. There are classifications to be found in the present improved state of the natural sciences not more accurate than this;—that arrangement, for example, which assigns to the same “class and ranks under one name the man, that walks upright and the whale that swims, the ant, that creeps, and the gnat, that flies.”

§. 121. *Whether reasoning be possible without general terms.*

It has been maintained by the Nominalists, who hold to the opinion of no general ideas, separate from their names, that no process of reasoning, however concise, can be carried on without the aid of general terms; and of course, the statement, made in §. 118, that there must be a feeling or notion of resemblance, that is, a general idea, distinct both from the individual objects and from the common name, cannot be true. An attention to what takes place in the minds of infants, shows the contrary; that they *can* reason, draw conclusions, from one thing to another, and that, consequently, they have general ideas such, as have been explained, that is, certain general but real feelings of resemblance, altogether and essentially independent of the names, which are subsequently made to stand for them.

It cannot, indeed be said, that the infant carries on its arguments to any great extent, but it does to some extent, and accurately. Were it not able to follow out some concise trains of argument, its existence could hardly be preserved. When the infant has once put his finger in the flame, he avoids a repetition of the experiment, reasoning in this way, that there is a resemblance between one flame and another, and that what has caused him pain, will be likely under the same circumstances to cause the same sensation. When the infant sees before him some glittering toy, he reaches his hand towards it, and is evidently

induced to do so by a thought of this kind, that the acquisition of the object will now follow the effort of the hand, as it has a similar effort previously made.

Words, then, whether general or particular, are not absolutely necessary to reasoning, and of course there may be ideas both general and particular, and those ideas may be compared together without words. The illustrations, which have been given, are sufficient, although brought from what we perceive to take place in infants. It is hazardous to refer on this point to those, who are grown up and have for years employed language. The words and the thoughts are, in this instance, so strongly associated, that it is difficult to separate them.

"The use of general terms," says Brown, "is not to enable man to reason, but to enable him to reason *well*. They fix the steps of our progress. They give us the power of availing ourselves with confidence of our own past reasonings and of the reasonings of others. They do not absolutely prevent us from wandering, but they prevent us from wandering *very far*, and are marks of direction, to which we can return. Without them we should be like travellers, journeying on an immense plain without a track, and without any points on the sky to determine, whether we were continuing to move east or west, north or south."

#### §. 122. *Of the formation of verbs.*

In the remarks, which have gone before, we have given an account of the origin of appellatives, or nouns substantive; there are other ideas, expressed by another class of words, viz. VERBS. And these words are of great consequence both in the construction and the application of language. As the ideas, expressed by verbs, concern actions rather than objects, and the attributes and affections of things rather than the things themselves, and cannot, therefore, be so easily defined to the understanding, and fixed upon by it, words of this kind were not, we may suppose, so rapidly formed as others, although some of them must have been of very early origin.

Their origin may be illustrated in this way. Let it be admitted, that the primitive inhabitants have given names to certain wild animals; Condillac supposes, that such names were given first, before those of trees, fountains, &c. No matter on what principle, those names were selected, for after all the investigations in regard to it, it is still a subject of doubt. It soon happens, as is very natural and reasonable to be imagined, that they see one of these animals, advancing towards them with great speed and apparent ferocity. Certainly they would have an idea of the motion of the animal, as something different from the animal itself; and if they could give a name to the animal, why not to the fact of his coming towards them or running from them, as the fact might be?

In the formation of the noun substantive or general term, they exclaimed, The tyger! The lion! and this exclamation became in time the common name. But now they discover a new attribute or action of the wild beast, which affects them strongly and deserves a distinct appellation, and, hence, they utter some new exclamation; it may be conjectured, the word, COMES, or RUSHES; and the cry now is, tyger—rushes! lion—comes! The articulate sounds, which under such circumstances are adopted, whatever they may be, are eventually fixed upon, as the conventional and permanent representatives of certain actions, attributes, and affections of things, and in the maturity of society and of knowledge, when man finds all that he has learnt subjected to a more exact and scientific classification, they are accordingly classed as VERBS.

§. 123. *Of the formation of conjunctions and other particles.*

It has been conjectured, that nouns and verbs were, in time of origin, the earliest of all the parts of speech; and, in truth, the hypothesis does not rest solely upon conjecture. It was the object of men at first to express their ideas, as they could; and they reckoned it of but little consequence, whether they did it neatly or elegantly.



Conjunctions, adverbs, prepositions, relative pronouns, were introduced by degrees, as they were found to be needed ; but nouns and verbs could never be dispensed with. And in addition to this consideration, that these parts of speech could not at any time have been dispensed with, there is much reason to suppose from a variety of investigations, that the particles, especially conjunctions, prepositions, and adverbs, were derived either from verbs or substantives, and of course they must have been subsequent in origin.

It will at this time be sufficient briefly to examine this point in respect to conjunctions.

The conjunction, *IF*, was originally a verb in the imperative mode, viz. *GIF*, the imperative of the Saxon word, *GIFAN*, which is the same with the modern, English infinitive, *TO GIVE*. If we consider the original import of the words in this sentence, viz. *If ye love me, ye will keep my commandments*, it will stand thus ; *Give or grant this, viz. ye love me, ye will keep my commandments*.

The conjunctions, *UNLESS*, *LEST*, and *ELSE*, are derivatives from the Saxon verb, *LESAN*, to dismiss. The meaning, conveyed in this sentence, viz. *Unless ye believe, ye shall not understand*, may be thus analyzed ;—*Dismiss, ye believe, (the circumstance of belief being out of the way,) ye shall not understand*.

The conjunction, *THOUGH*, was originally a verb in the imperative from the Saxon, *THAFIAN*, meaning to grant or allow. The word was originally *THAF* or *THOF*, and is thus pronounced by many of the common people in England and the United States to this day. This sentence, *Though he slay me, I will trust in him*, may be thus explained, in conformity with the etymological derivation ;—*Allow, grant this, he will slay me, I will trust in him*. Other particles, particularly adverbs and prepositions, may, in many cases, be traced to nouns.

§. 124. *Further remarks on the meaning of particles.*

It is proper to guard ourselves here, by saying, that when a language is once fully formed and settled upon, we would not advise a confident and indiscriminate reference to the etymology of particles, in order to determine their present significancy; although in many cases, as in those mentioned in the preceding section, such a reference throws light upon them. Whatever particles may have been at first, whether nouns or verbs, or whatever direct and positive significancy they may have once had, they are at last, when the language is fully formed, evidently without meaning, except so far as they are connected with other words.

The proper use of them seems to be, to express the states of our mind, as we pass from one clause of a sentence to another, or from one proposition to another; also the restriction, distinction, and opposition of our thoughts. Admitting, then, that, in some instances, we can derive considerable aid from etymology, the surest method of ascertaining the meaning of this class of words, is by observing the operations of our own minds, as we connect together our ideas in clauses, sentences, and consecutive propositions.

§. 125. *Of the origin of particular or proper names.*

Although general names or appellatives, as appeared in §. 116, were first applied to particular objects, as soon as they became general and were employed to denote classes of objects, they were no longer of use in the specification of individuals. Their utility in that respect necessarily ceased. Hence arose the class of substances or nouns, called particular or proper names, designed especially to indicate individual objects. In ascertaining to what objects terms of this kind shall be assigned, it can only be said, that we give proper names to such things, as we have frequent and urgent occasion to mention; no other rule can readily be laid down.

We, accordingly, give particular names to rivers, lakes, cataracts, mountains, because we have frequent occasions to speak of them individually, of the Mississippi, the La Plata, the Alps, and the Appenines. There is still greater reason, why we should give names of this sort to our fellow beings, with whom we constantly associate, and on whom our happiness is in no small degree dependent. But the assignation of proper names is far from being limited to men, or to rivers, or to mountains, or to cataracts;—we continually meet with them.

The merchant gives names to his vessels, the farmer to his oxen, the hunter to his dogs, and the jockey to his horses, on the same principles and for the same reason, that one river is called Ganges and another Danube, and that one man is called John, another William.

§. 126. *Of the meaning of words as used by different persons.*

Words are to be considered, in the first place, as signs of the ideas of the speaker, of the person, who uses them. Very little privilege indeed would it be for him to make use of words, except as the signs of his own thoughts.

A person, therefore, having a very imperfect notion of the powers of the electric fluid, when he uses the word, ELECTRICITY, expresses, not the more ample idea of the well-informed philosopher, but that limited conception merely, which he himself happens to have.

We suppose a piece of gold to be presented to a child, and, undoubtedly, the prominent idea, which he has of it, is, that it is something of a bright, beautiful yellow. Another person, more advanced in age, adds the idea of weight to his complex notion of it; another, who is better acquainted with its true nature, adds malleability, fusibility and any other qualities, which he may have been enabled to discover. The word, GOLD, in each of these cases stands for that particular idea, which each person has, and no more.

But in our intercourse with our fellow men we find our-

selves constantly and necessarily making a reference in the language, which we use, to the ideas of others, as well as to the ideas in our own minds. I say, we do it necessarily, otherwise intercourse by means of language could not be carried on.

And it becomes then important to inquire, what is the general rule, by which men in this particular are to be governed? When have they done what is incumbent upon them in ascertaining the meaning of others?

Our duty in this respect is fulfilled, when we use words with their customary signification, employing them, as far as we are able to learn, with that meaning, which is ordinarily and generally attached to them.

When a meaning has been once affixed to a word, it is effectual in calling up to the mind the thing signified by it; the mention of the word or the sight of it, (such is the power of that characteristick of our mental constitution, which is termed ASSOCIATION,) almost as readily suggests the idea, as the object itself.

§. 127. *We have not words for all our ideas.*

Words are employed as signs, standing for ideas; but it must not be imagined, and certainly is not true, that all ideas have words, corresponding to them. This assertion holds in regard to both simple and complex ideas. Among our simple ideas are colours; we call one colour, RED; another, WHITE; but it is certainly not too much to say, there are many diversities or grades in those colours, which we have a notion of or perceive, but have never given them specific names. The same may be said of the diversities in our sensations of hearing, touch, and taste.

There are various complex ideas, which a person has, or may have, and yet without names, answering to them. In translating from one language into another, the truth here stated is clearly perceived; in reading the German language, for example, which has a large number of very expressive compounds, we often meet with words, which suggest to the mind very clear ideas, but find no single

words in English precisely corresponding. And it is sometimes with difficulty, that we can express them even by a number or combination of words. But, in general, we find in every well-formed language words, sufficient for the expression of those ideas, which are most distinctly formed, and which, in the intercourse of life, we have most frequent occasion to communicate.

§. 128. *Of the definition of words.*

The schoolmen defined terms *PER GENUS ET DIFFERENTIUM*, that is, by a term more general, than the word to be defined, with an additional word or words, expressive of some specifick or distinguishing quality. Thus, man was defined by them *ANIMAL RATIONALE*, an animal endued with reason; *ANIMAL* being the term, wider in signification or more generick than man, and *RATIONALE* the epithet, indicative of the difference between man and other animals. A serious objection might be readily raised to this definition. If the schoolmen meant by the epithet *RATIONALE* what has been termed the discursive faculty or that operation, by which we compare together propositions and deduce conclusions from premises, it might be questioned, whether horses and elephants are not men, since it is the opinion of very many, that they possess this ability in some small degree.

A better mode of definition is by enumerating and explaining some essential elements, entering into the nature and composition of the thing to be defined; and this analysis of the elementary parts may be more or less particular, as circumstances require.

It should be remarked here, that we now speak of the definition of words, standing for complex ideas; since, as already observed in §. 50, where the reader is referred to this section for a further view of the subject, simple ideas do not admit of definitions.

No one can make the simple ideas of red, white, blue, sweet, bitter, &c., more clear than they are at present by any definitions whatever, which can be given. Motion

is a simple idea. It was defined by the schoolmen *ACTUS ENTIS IN POTENTIA QUATENUS IN POTENTIA*, the act of a being in power as far forth as in power. This, instead of making our idea of motion any more clear, is quite unintelligible.

At a later period it has also been defined a passage from one place to another. To this definition there is this objection, that passage is synonymous with motion, and it amounts to no more than to say, that motion is motion from one place to another.

Every person understands what is the meaning of the word, *light*, but the schoolmen, in order to make this general understanding more easy and clear, defined it the act of perspicuous as far forth as perspicuous ; but if this definition should be given to a blind man, who had never possessed the faculty of sight, he would clearly be no wiser for it.

Although it be difficult, or rather impossible to define simple ideas, to make them any clearer than they already are, what are called complex ideas admit of a definition. Complex ideas consist of various simple ideas combined together ; the words, standing for them, cannot, indeed, of themselves, suggest the simple ideas, and show us what they are, independently of the aid of the senses ; but they may clearly and readily indicate to us, how these ideas are to be arranged and combined together in order to form complex ones. The word, *rainbow*, expresses a complex idea. Accurately define it by an enumeration of the colours, entering into its composition, and by a statement of its appearance to a person, who has the faculty of sight, and he will understand or have a conception of it, although he may never have seen one ; and this happens, because he has the simple ideas, and the words or description shows him, how they are combined together. But it is impossible to impart such a conception to a person, who has always been blind, because he has never had the simple ideas of colours ; and words merely can never convey to him that knowledge.

#### §. 129. *Of the imperfection of language.*

Language, notwithstanding its great and undeniable

advantages, has its imperfections, and in this, is like every thing else, connected with our earthly existence. It may be said in general, to be imperfect, or to fail of its object, whenever the same ideas are not excited in the mind of the hearer or reader, as in that of the speaker or writer. Nor can we reasonably expect, when we look at the cause or foundation of this imperfection, that it will ever be otherwise; since that cause will be found to exist ultimately in the condition of the mind and in our ideas, rather than in the words, which stand for them. This requires a brief illustration.

It often happens, that men view the same objects and actions in different lights; whether it be owing to some difference in early education, or to local prejudices, or to some other cause, the fact itself is well known, and may well be considered, as frequently unavoidable. Hence different persons very often attach the same name to certain objects and actions, when their views of those actions and objects are not the same. One has a greater number, than another, of simple ideas, entering into his complex notions, and perhaps, in the formation of the compound, they respectively give to those simple ideas a different relation to each other. The consequence, therefore, is, that, in such cases, as have now been mentioned, the names or words, which are used, necessarily fail of exciting in the hearer the same ideas, that exist in the mind of the speaker.

Many of the disputes, which have existed in the world, (and the history of philosophical opinions shows, how numerous they have been,) have been caused by a misunderstanding, of this sort; different persons using the same terms, when their ideas are not the same. In support of this remark, it will be enough merely to refer to the often repeated discussions upon virtue, conscience, faith, free will, obligation, religion &c.

But language, in so far as it is imperfect, fails of the great object, for which it was invented and agreed upon, and it, therefore, becomes important to diminish the amount of this failure and to guard against it, as far as possible.

To this end, the following rules on the use of words may be laid down.

§. 130. *Words are not to be used without meaning.*

RULE FIRST.—In the employment of language, the first rule to be laid down, is this, that we should never use a word without some meaning. It may be thought extraordinary, that any should use words in this way, but a little examination cannot fail to convince one of the fact. Let any one inquire of those persons, who are in the habit of employing such words, as instinct, sympathy, antipathy, and a variety of others, which might be mentioned, and it will speedily appear, that, while some are greatly at a loss to assign any sort of meaning to them, others are utterly unable to do it. They are applied, as one may say, by rote; they have been learnt from hearing others use them, and are repeated, because they have been learnt, without their significancy having ever been inquired into.

There are not only words used in this way, but whole phrases, of which the Peripatetick philosophy readily affords many instances. What can be said of “vegetative souls,” “intentional species,” “substantial forms,” “abhorrence of a vacuum,” and the like, but that they are combinations of terms without meaning; and while they have the appearance of science, are no better, than an intended imposition on the understanding?

This error is much more frequent, than has generally been supposed;—many words go down from one to another by a sort of hereditary descent, and are passively received and adopted, like a thousand opinions and prejudices, which exist again, merely because they have existed before. We are exceedingly apt to adopt words from our parents and instructors, and to repeat the peculiar phraseologies of our favourite sect or party, and either out of our great reverence for them, or from the circumstance of our being too indolent to make careful inquiries, we rest satisfied in a shameful ignorance of every thing but a mere sound. Hence, if it be considered desirable, that language should retain its value, which chiefly consists in re-



cording and communicating thought, the rule laid down should be strictly observed,—not to employ words without meaning.

§. 131. *Words should stand for distinct and determinate ideas.*

SECOND RULE ;—It is not enough, that we use words with meaning, or have ideas for them, but a second rule is, that the meaning or the ideas be distinct and determinate.

We apply the epithet, **DISTINCT**, to simple ideas, meaning by the expression, that they should carefully be kept separate from, and not confounded with other simple ideas. The epithet, **DETERMINATE**, may more properly be applied to the class of our ideas, called complex. As complex ideas are made up of simple ones, when we say, that they should be determinate, the meaning is, that a precise collection of simple ideas should be fixed upon in the mind ; that it should not remain a matter of uncertainty what simple ideas are included and what are not. We at once see the value of this rule. If our simple ideas are confounded, one with another, or if we know not accurately the elements of our complex states of mind, these circumstances necessarily diminish very much from the value of the words, standing for them. With this explanation, the rule cannot fail to be understood, viz.—That our words should have a distinct and determinate meaning ; or what is the same thing, that the ideas should be distinct and determinate, which the words express.

The application of this rule seems to be peculiarly important in regard to terms, standing for mixed modes, especially such names of mixed modes, as are of a moral kind. And one reason of this is, that these terms have no settled objects in nature, no archetypes, to which they can be referred, which are external to, and independent of the mind itself. They have been rightly regarded, as a species of mental creations. The materials or simple ideas which compose them, are in a certain sense independent of the mind, but the arrangement of them is not ; and they,

therefore, have an existence by the mere choice and act of the mind, and are properly intellectual formations.

The word *JUSTICE*, comes within the class of ideas, called mixed modes, and, being a moral term, is of frequent occurrence ; but, although every person may be supposed to attach some meaning to it, that meaning is not always determinate, and, in consequence, the term often causes perplexity. We will imagine the proper definition of it to be this,—The assigning to any one a reward or punishment agreeably to *LAW*. It will readily occur, that the complex term will be involved in obscurity and uncertainty without a clear understanding of the subordinate idea, expressed by the word, *LAW* ; that the compound or the whole will not be fully known, without a knowledge of the number and of the character of the parts ;—and the same of other mixed modes.

In respect to the names of substances it should be observed, that the ideas, which the names represent, should be not only distinct and determinate, but such, as will accurately correspond to the things themselves.

It will, undoubtedly, be considered troublesome, to be under the necessity of complying with the directions here laid down, and to take so much care in settling in our minds the precise import of our complex notions. But it is a labour, which cannot well be dispensed with. Until it be undergone, men will often be perplexed as to their own meaning, and disputes, which might by a different course be speedily terminated, will be prolonged and multiplied without end.

§. 132. *The same word not to be used at the same time in different senses.*

THIRD RULE ;—We are not to use the same word in the same discourse with different meanings ; with this exception, that, if we should find it in some degree necessary slightly to vary the signification, which may sometimes be the case, notice should be given of it. But it is at once remarked, in connection with this rule, that words in all

languages have a variety of significations, and that it cannot well be otherwise, unless we are willing to multiply them to an inordinate and burdensome degree. This is true;—but it may justly be replied, that no well constituted language admits varieties of meaning, which the train of the discourse, the natural connection of thought fails to suggest. When, therefore, a person uses an important word in an argument with another, or in any separate discourse, whether the signification be the common one or not, it is rightly expected, that he employ it in the same sense afterwards, in which he was understood to use it, when he began. If he do not, there will be unavoidable misunderstanding; the most laboured discourses will fail of giving instruction, and controversies under such circumstances cannot be terminated. This making the same word stand for different ideas, is spoken of by Mr. Locke, as a species of cheating; it being much the same, as if a person in settling his accounts, should employ the number, THREE, sometimes for three; at others, for four, five, or nine, which could not be attributed to any thing else, than great ignorance, or great want of honesty.

§. 133. *Words are to be employed agreeably to good and reputable use.*

THE FOURTH RULE is, that we are to employ names with such ideas, as good and reputable use has affixed to them. One object of language is to communicate our ideas to others; and this object necessarily fails without an observance of this rule, since common or general use, in the meaning of writers on rhetorick, is no other, than good or reputable use.

This subject was briefly touched upon in §. 126, where it appeared, that, if we would fulfil the purposes of language, we ought to use words with their customary signification, employing them with that meaning, which, as far as we are able to learn, is ordinarily and generally attached to them. But this remark does not exhaust this topic,

It still remains to be inquired, What we are to under-

stand-by common, or, what is to be considered the same thing, good and reputable usage?—and this is a point, which cannot be decided without some care, and a recurrence to some general principles. In answer to the question, What is the common usage of a language?—What is good and reputable use?—or What is that use of a word, which will justify one in adopting and employing it? the three following rules may be given.

§. 134. *What constitutes good and reputable use.*

(1) It is one circumstance in favour of the good and reputable usage of a word, which constitutes what is otherwise termed common use, that it is found in the writings of a considerable number, if not the majority of good authors. It is not, in ordinary cases, sufficient to authorize a word, that it is found in one merely, or even in a few such writers, and those, who are supported by such limited authority, cannot expect to be generally understood.

(2) A second direction is, that the words, which lay claim to good and reputable use, should not be provincial, or limited to a particular district of country;—Further, those words, which are recently introduced from a foreign tongue, either by merchants in the intercourse of business, or by travellers for other reasons or in other ways, but which are not naturalized, and are not known to be necessary, have not this character. Good and reputable words are such, as are in use among the great mass of the people in all parts of the territories of a country, however extensive, where any language is professed to be spoken. This is what is termed national use, in distinction from that jargon, which often springs up in neighbourhoods, or which, in the ways, to which we have already alluded, is at times introduced from a foreign source.

(3) There is implied, thirdly, in the common and reputable use of a language, that use, which prevails at the present time. If we would employ words with their customary signification, with that meaning, which is ordinarily attached to them, we must adopt the use of the period,

in which we live. It is not, however, necessarily implied in this rule, that we must limit ourselves to the present year or even the present age. Certain limits, it is true, must be fixed upon, which include our own times, but they may be of greater or less extent, although it is a matter of no small difficulty judiciously to ascertain and define them.

**NOTE.** The subject of the nature and characteristics of the use, which gives law to language, is particularly examined by Dr. Campbell in his *Philosophy of Rhetorick*. To this book, the reputation of which is too well established to stand in need of any recommendation here, the reader is referred for further suggestions on the topick of this section.

#### §. 135. *Of an universal language.*

The inquiry has sometimes been started, Whether there might not be a language, which should be permanent, and be employed by all nations;—in other words, Whether there might not be an universal language? The impracticability of such an universal tongue appears both from the nature and the history of this mode of expressing thought.

(1) The nature of language shows its impracticability.

It is an idea, which observation seems to have well established, that whatever is imperfect has a tendency to work out its own ruin; and language, however excellent an invention, can never be otherwise than imperfect, since the human mind, which forms it, is itself limited, and is often running into error. It will illustrate this remark, when we are reminded, that the external, material world is one of the great sources of our ideas, but our mental powers being imperfect, different persons form different ideas of the same objects. They then agree in giving the same names to these ideas or combinations of ideas, and there often arises in this way a mutual misapprehension of that very agreement, which is not only the origin, but the support of language. The seeds of the mutability and destruction of language are, therefore, sown in its very birth,

since a very little reflection cannot fail to show, how many perplexities, how many discussions, how many changes may arise from this single circumstance, that, in consequence of the imperfection of our faculties, men often agree to consider words, as standing for what they imagine to be the same ideas, but which are not. We cannot, then, reasonably expect an universal and permanent language, until our minds can fully penetrate into the true nature of things, until our ideas are perfect, and different individuals can certainly and exactly inform themselves of the thoughts, existing in the minds of others.

Further ;—the political institutions of one country, the peculiarities in the aspects of its natural scenery, early associations, occupations, and habits, lay the foundation for a variety of thoughts and shades of thought, which, in other countries, will not exist, because the causes of their existence are not to be found. If thoughts, feelings, imaginations exist under these circumstances, words will be needed to express them, for which there will be no occasion in another country and among another people ;—so that we find here also a permanent and extensive cause of the diversities of language.

(2) The impracticability of an universal language is seen also from the history of languages in times past.

We cannot conceive of an universal language without supposing it to be permanent, for if there were any causes, which would operate to affect its permanency, the operation of the same causes would be felt in checking and preventing its universality. But if we search the whole history of man, in order to find a language, that has remained permanent, unaltered ; it will be an entirely fruitless pursuit. Not one such can be found.

There appears to have been originally in Asia Minor a language, spoken to a great extent, which after a time disappeared, so that the very name is lost. So far from being able to maintain itself and increase the territories, where it was spoken, it was at last broken up into a variety of subordinate idioms, certainly no less than seven, the Hebrew,

the Syriack, the Chaldaick, the Arabick, the Ethiopick, the Phenician, and Samaritan.

A common language seems also to have been the original foundation of the different dialects of Greece.

No reason can be given in explanation of the want of permanency in these ancient languages, which would not lead us to expect constant changes in any other tongue, and under any other circumstances. If all the nations of the earth could, by the providence of the Supreme Being, be made to-morrow acquainted with one universal speech, a knowledge of the nature of language and of its history would warrant us in predicting the speedy discontinuance of this universality and the division of the language of the world into the dialects of islands, continents, and sectional territories. So that the remark of De Stutt-Tracy, a French writer on the Mind, that an universal language is as much an impossibility as a perpetual motion, is not without reason.

§. 136. *Remarks of Condillac on the changes, and corruptions of language.*

It is a remark of Condillac, to whose treatise on the Origin of Knowledge, we have already had occasion to refer, that it is nearly the same in language, as in physicks, where motion, the source of life, becomes the principle of destruction. "When a language abounds (says he) with original writers in every kind, the more a person is endowed with abilities, the more difficult he thinks it will be to surpass them. A mere equality would not satisfy his ambition; like them he wants the pre-eminence. He, therefore, tries a new road. But as every style analogous to the character of the language, and to his own, hath been already used by preceding writers, he has nothing left but to deviate from analogy. Thus in order to be an original, he is obliged to contribute to the ruin of a language, which a century sooner he would have helped to improve.

Though such writers may be criticised, their superiour abilities must still command success. The ease there is in copying their defects, soon persuades men of indiffer-

ent capacities, that they shall acquire the same degree of reputation. Then begins the reign of subtle and strained conceits, of affected antitheses, of specious paradoxes, of frivolous and far-fetched expressions, of new-fangled words, and in short of the jargon of persons, whose understandings have been debauched by bad metaphysics. The publick applauds; foolish and ridiculous writings, the beings of a day, are surprisingly multiplied; a vicious taste infects the arts and sciences, which is followed by a visible decrease of men of abilities."

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## CHAPTER TWELFTH.

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### CHARACTERISTICS OF LANGUAGES.

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#### §. 137. *General remarks on peculiarities of style.*

The style of a writer is his choice of words and manner of arranging them. Every writer of genius employs a style in some degree peculiar to himself. The nature of language leads us to expect this. Language is the expression of thought, and all writers of real worth think and feel in some degree for themselves; their style, therefore, which embodies and sets forth their mental states to others, will have a form and impress of its own. The languages of nations also have a style or peculiarity of manner,—certain prevailing characteristics, which readily distinguish them from those of other nations.

The style of individual writers, the characteristics in the style of Savages in their brief records and speeches, and those also of the languages of civilized and literary communities are all subjects of philosophical inquiry, and never can be fully understood and explained without referring to some principles of the human mind.



§. 138. *Characteristics of style in uncivilized nations.*

As uncivilized tribes are ignorant of alphabetical language, they are unable to furnish us with many specimens of mental effort;—rarely any thing more than some brief historical sketches, war songs, and speeches. The words, which such tribes employ, are generally few in number, compared with the vocabulary of civilized nations; and of this number only a small proportion are the signs of abstract ideas. Having but few abstract ideas, and, consequently, but few names for them, they are under a necessity of resorting constantly to figurative illustrations; so that their language seems to partake of the materiality of the external objects, with which they are chiefly conversant. But aided, as they are, by metaphorical expressions, their stock of words still remains small; and the sentences, which they utter, must, therefore, of necessity be short. These short and figurative sentences are inspirited with all the untamed passions of a savage mind.

“The bones of our countrymen (say the Chiefs) lie uncovered; their bloody bed has not been washed clean; their spirits cry against us; they must be appeased; sit no longer inactive upon your mats; lift the hatchets; console the spirits of the dead.”

§. 139. *Origin of apologues and of the parabolick style.*

Nations, while in an uncivilized state, or when at best they are only in their progress towards intellectual refinement, do not often attempt abstract reasonings or abstract speculations of any kind;—and this is one marked characteristic of the style of such periods. The causes are chiefly two.

One of which is, that they have a small number of general terms; and it could not be expected to be otherwise. It appeared at §. 121, that we are capable of carrying on trains of reasoning to some little extent without the aid of general terms or those words, which stand for abstract ideas; but it was no less evident, that they are of great

use, and that without them all processes of reasoning must be very much circumscribed.

This circumstance also deserves consideration, as accounting in some measure for the absence of abstract speculations and reasonings from the mental efforts of nations in the early periods of their history, viz. They do not possess, to that number desirable, those parts of speech, such as conjunctions and relative pronouns, which are used to connect sentences and clauses of sentences, and to show their distinction from each other, or opposition. It appeared at §. 123, that these classes of words, which are evidently very important in long and connected trains of thought, and also adverbs and prepositions, are subsequent in their origin to nouns and verbs; in other words, that, in the formation of a language, these are the parts, which are completed last.

Under these circumstances, their reasonings, as might be expected, are applied to the minds of people by a variety of obvious and familiar illustrations,—by means of apologues and parables.

When Menenius Agrippa (year 260 of the Roman republick) wishes to convince the people of the necessity of subordination to the regularly constituted government, he lays down no abstract proposition and enters into no argument. The historian informs us, that he merely related, in an antiquated and uncouth way, the story of a rebellion on the part of the other members of the body, the hands, the mouth, and the teeth, against the stomach, and leaves them to make an application of it. The people understood what he meant.

Not to say any thing of the apologues and parables, attributed to Æsop and others, the Bible itself, written for the most part at a very early period, helps to illustrate these remarks. Who does not recollect the apologue, of the trees by Jotham in the book of Judges, that of the two men in one city by Nathan, and a multitude of others;—in particular, the interesting parables of the Saviour?

§. 140. *Of the style of civilized and scientific nations,*

As a nation advances in knowledge, its language becomes more strictly conventional, losing by degrees that metaphorical aspect, which it presented in its earlier periods. A variety of new words are introduced, which previously had no existence, because the things, for which they stand, were not then known. New arts have their technical names and epithets, and new sciences furnish us with their novel nomenclatures.

The distiller speaks of the cohobation of liquors; the worker in mines of collieries; the chymist of sulphates and muriates; the botanist and mineralogist employ a variety of terms, peculiar to their respective departments. An increased refinement and abstraction discovers itself in terms, appropriated to moral, political, and literary subjects; and the language in all respects is more removed from the senses, and becomes more intellectual. But while it is more exact and scientific, it is less fervent and poetical; a Savage, if he had the most refined language of Europe at his command, would be at a loss to express in it the fiery emotions of his bosom; he would choose the dialect of his tribe.

§. 141. *Characteristics of languages depend much on the habits, &c. of the people.*

Individual writers, as already observed, have a style that is, characteristics of expression, of their own; for every one has a tendency to connect together thoughts or words, which are the signs of thoughts, agreeably to his peculiar passions, and intellectual habits. But languages also, considered in their whole extent, have a style; because the nations, the whole mass of people, that make use of those languages, have their characteristics, as well as individuals. It follows, then, from this, that languages assume their general character or style, in a good measure, from that of the people; and this is what we are willing to maintain. It will be found, that the language

of every people has words, combinations of words, peculiarities of grammatical construction, &c. springing entirely out of the national habits and the exigencies of their peculiar circumstances. Thus,—we have the word, *CORBAN*, in Hebrew, *ANGGAROS* in Persian, *OSTRAKISMOS* in Greek, *PROSCRIPTIO* and *VIRTUS* in Latin; words, which are either wholly peculiar to their respective languages, or employed with some peculiarity of meaning, not elsewhere acknowledged. We find combinations of words and peculiarities of grammatical construction in the Hebrew and its cognate dialects, which we do not find in the languages of modern Europe; and this will be more or less the case in whatever other languages or classes of languages we may compare together.

The single fact, without going into particulars, that no person can become fully acquainted with the true import and spirit of a language, without an acquaintance with the geography of their country and its natural scenery, without a knowledge of the dress, buildings, arts, religion, customs, and history of the people, seems enough in support of the remark, that languages take their character from the circumstances of those, who speak them. If the fact, on which the conclusion is founded, be doubted, then we ask, why instructors consider it so essential, that their pupils should have a knowledge of the antiquities of the Romans, of the antiquities of the Greeks, of the antiquities of the Hebrews?—and why this course is pursued, or is acknowledged to be requisite, in respect to every other dead language?

§. 142. *Languages help us in forming a correct idea of the national character.*

If the statements in the preceding section be true, it follows, that a knowledge of languages very much helps us in acquiring a knowledge of the character of the people, who speak them. The study of every language is the examination of a new chapter in the history and operations of the mind;—that is, of the mind, as it is modified by pe-

culiar circumstances, the climate, government, habits, &c., of a people. Without an acquaintance, therefore, with their vernacular tongue, the critick will in vain take it upon him, to judge of the philosophy of their literature and character. It is this, that breathes the national spirit;—it fixes and retains it, after the nation itself is extinct.

Whatever may have been at any time thought, it will be found on examination, that those individuals, who are looked up to, as the eminent writers of a nation, seldom arise, until its language is nearly or quite completed. They employ it, as the people have formed it; and the people have formed it, as their feelings and habits prompted.

§. 143. *Of the correspondence between national intellect and the progress of a language.*

The circumstance, that language is a great and admirable instrument of intellectual power, is of itself no small confirmation of the hint thrown out in §. 142, that developments of intellectual strength will correspond to the progressive improvement of a language, and that its great men, those, who are to speak in it long as it shall exist, will not make their appearance, until it have arrived to some degree of perfection.

Let it be supposed, that in the midst of a savage tribe, whose language is rude, a person is found of perfect mental organization, capable of remembering, separating, and comparing ideas, with a quickness of invention, and other qualities of genius above the common lot. He has influence over the minds of others; he is consulted in difficult emergencies; he is accounted wise; but how far he falls short of the mark, which is reached by others of originally no greater genius, who appear in a civilized community with the advantage of a perfect language!

“It is with languages (says Condillac) as with geometrical signs; they give a new insight into things, and dilate the mind in proportion as they are more perfect. Sir Isaac Newton’s extraordinary success was owing to the choice which had been already made of signs, together

with the contrivance of methods of calculation. Had he appeared earlier, he might have been a great man for the age he would have lived in, but he would not have been the admiration of ours. It is the same in every other branch of learning. The success of geniuses, who have had the happiness even of the best organization, depends entirely on the progress of the language in regard to the age in which they live; for words answer to geometrical signs, and the manner of using them to methods of calculation. In a language, therefore, defective in words, or whose construction is not sufficiently easy and convenient, we should meet with the same obstacles as occurred in geometry before the invention of algebra. The French tongue was for a long time so unfavourable to the progress of the mind, that if we could frame an idea of Corneille successively in the different ages of our monarchy, we should find him to have been possessed of less genius in proportion to his greater distance from the age in which he lived, till at length we should reach a Corneille, who could not give the least mark of abilities." (Origin of Knowledge, part II. §. I.) This writer thinks, it may be demonstrated, that there can be no such thing, as a superiour genius, till the language of a nation has been considerably improved.

§. 144. *Different languages suited to different minds.*

Some languages are more suited to certain minds than they are to others; more adapted also to the discussion of certain subjects, than others. The French language is simple, clear, precise, and, therefore, favourable to analytical investigations. And it is here, it may be conjectured, that we find one cause of the superiour excellence of the mathematicians and philosophers, and of the comparative inferiority of the poets of that nation. Not that we mean to speak lightly of French poetry, for the genius of Corneille and other writers cannot but be felt even under the disadvantages of their language; but it cannot be presumed, that it would express, would give a reality of form and existence,

so admirably as the English, to the diversified, and illimitable genius of Shakespeare.

In no other languages, than the English and the German, could the *Paradise Lost* of Milton and the *Messiah* of Klopstock have been originally written; and into none others can their true spirit be transfused. To take a case yet more obvious, the Athenian orator could never have composed his orations in the language of the Prophets, that language being neither suited to his mind nor his circumstances. The original tongue of the Old Testament is well adapted to lyrics and some forms of descriptive poetry, and to the simplest species of narration, but not to philosophical analysis, and to such abstract reasonings, as are more or less found in orations of a political nature.

§. 145. *Difficulties of translating from one language to another.*

It was remarked, that the true spirit of the *Paradise Lost* and of the *Messiah* of Klopstock cannot be transfused into any other language, than those, in which they were originally written. All translations from one language to another are difficult, but this is emphatically true of poetry. But it is evident, that these difficulties could not exist to their present extent, if all languages had not a character or style of their own.

Every tongue will be found to have combinations of ideas, peculiar to itself, which are expressed by a single word, and which do not exist in this precise state of combination in other languages. See for instances §. 141. A variety of associations also will be connected with the words and phrases of one dialect, which are not connected with the corresponding words and phrases in others, and which slightly affect the meaning in a manner, not readily perceptible by a foreigner. These go, among other things, to constitute the style or characteristics of languages, and are found in poetry more than in writings on other subjects;—and hence the peculiar difficulty, which has always been experienced, of translating it.

§. 146. *Characteristics of the Greek and Latin languages.*

There are characteristics of a language, which are appropriate to some particular period of its progress, to its state of infancy, of manhood, or of decline. In its infancy it is metaphorical, wanting in copiousness, and adapted rather to express strong passions, than to abstract reasoning. In its manhood it seems to be more removed from the senses and to become more strictly the creation of the intellect; it has an increase in its range of expression, and is by degrees suited to abstract reasoning in its different kinds and to the various departments of literature. The causes and some of the marks of the decline of a language are to be found at §. 136, in the preceding chapter.

We have seen also, that there is an influence exerted by the language on the men of superiour minds, the early writers of a nation, and that particular languages are better adapted to some minds and some species of writing than others. The subject can be further illustrated by a brief specification of some circumstances, in which a number of important languages are found to differ; beginning with the Greek and Latin, which sustain a relation of no ordinary kind to certain living languages, which are extensively spoken.

The Greek and Latin differ from most modern languages in admitting of transposition, and for this purpose have furnished certain classes of their words with particular variations, by means of which they are made to refer to other words, with which they are naturally connected by the meaning or sense of the passage. Whether this power gives those languages any essential advantage over others, which are destitute of it, is a point, which has been variously decided. When these two languages are compared with each other, it will be found, that the Greek possesses remarkable harmony, which is at once perceived even by those, who do not understand the meaning of the words; it has a great abundance of words, expressive of the different classes of ideas and of slight variations of meaning,



which is what is meant by the copiousness of a language, and is supposed to possess more, than any other language, the quality of flexibility or the power of giving to its words a great variety of arrangements. The Latin is somewhat marked for an air of stateliness and majesty, but, compared with the Greek, is less copious and flexible; the circumstance of its want, in some degree, of flexibility, its possession of a form of majesty, which it is unable to assume and lay aside at pleasure like the Greek, renders it not well suited for easy conversation. We have in this language fine specimens of historical writing. It is not so well adapted to certain kinds of poetry, particularly the condensed and nervous sentiment, and the harmony of expression in lyrics;—Horace, a man of uncommon poetical genius, being the only successful instance in that kind of writing.

§. 147. *Characteristics of the Italian language.*

The origin of the Italian language is a subject of no little difficulty, but among the various hypotheses, which have been advanced, that of Muratori seems, on some accounts, preferable to others. He considers the Latin language to have been successively adopted by the barbarian invaders and conquerors of Italy, but to have received from each of them a portion of their own phrases, inflexions, and pronunciation; and that the modern Italian was gradually formed in this way. In the fourteenth century, the language seems to have become fully constructed and fixed; both poetry and prose having then been carried to a pitch of excellence, not since surpassed.

Sweetness is so much the characteristic of this language, that it has been almost regarded by some, as if purposely formed for the service of musical genius. Although it is exceedingly harmonious, there is a want of diversity in its sounds, so much so that even its harmony proves tiresome. There has been in this language a historian, Machiavelli, who formed himself on the model of Tacitus, but it cannot be pretended, that strength is one of its char-

acteristicks, or that it is equally suited with the Latin to a genius, like that of the Roman historian. Nothing can be more finely fitted, than the sameness of melody, which prevails in this language, to that state of mind, that plaintive and melancholy feeling, which is the subject of elegiack poems.

§. 148. *Characteristicks of the Spanish language.*

The Spanish language, which is the favoured dialect of so many young and hopeful republicks on the continent of America, is essentially the same in origin with the Italian; but differing from it, notwithstanding, in many respects. It has, like all other languages, a character of its own. Sonorous and full, it seems to indicate, in its structure and movements, that dignified and measured solemnity, which is so well known to be characteristick of the people, who speak it. While it has not less than the majesty of the Latin, it much excels it in being adapted to the purposes of conversation and the common intercourse of life. As far as conversation is concerned, it is by some thought, although its pretensions come in competition with those of the French, to be the most elegant and courteous language in Europe.

The order of chivalry first arose and was longest sustained among the Spaniards; and as all the members of that romantick institution were bound to be polite, as well as heroick, it naturally happened, that there were introduced in this way many expressions of respect and politeness, which have since been retained.

In connection with these remarks, and as helping to illustrate the general views, given in this chapter, we bring to the notice of the reader certain criticisms, which have been made on the English translations of that interesting and well-known work, the *Adventures of the Knight of La Mancha*. It is sometimes said with great confidence, that the characters so finely drawn by Cervantes are still but very imperfectly known, excepting by those, who have read his work in the language, in which he wrote. A great

point, in giving an idea of the two prominent characters, is, so to unite the follies of the hero with a certain gentlemanly demeanour, suited to his rank, and the obsequious credulity of the squire with such profound deference for his master, that the one may never fail in courtesy, and the other may never be wanting in respect. As their intercourse is constant, and they are on terms of great familiarity, it is peculiarly difficult to prevent that familiarity of intercourse from becoming, on the part of the knight, something worse than dignified condescension, and, on the other hand, not less difficult to prevent the credulous and busy simplicity of the squire from degenerating into impertinence and disrespect. The line is here drawn with undeviating strictness in the Spanish, with the exception of a few instances of an extreme kind, where it seems not beyond the bounds of probability, that even chivalry should forget that dignified and scrupulous conduct, which it had ever professed. In no other living language could these two characters have been drawn, in the respects now mentioned, with such fidelity as in the Spanish; as no other possesses in the same degree the requisite qualities.

Of the French language we have already briefly spoken,—enough for our present purpose. Of the English, the language of so many millions of freemen, and the repository of the thoughts of so many gifted minds, it is sufficient to let those, who use it, judge for themselves;—just mentioning, however, the necessity of caution, lest their relation to it should betray them into a greater sensibility to its beauties than its defects.

#### §. 149. *Requisites of an interpreter of languages.*

From the views, which have now been taken of the characteristics of language, we are led to educe a number of inferences, which may be stated in the form of rules or principles of interpretation;—wishing to observe, however, that both the subject of the characteristics of languages and that of interpretation are worthy of a more extensive examination, than can be expected from such abridged hints as these. They open a wide field for literary exertion, which

has been zealously occupied by a few critics, particularly among the Germans; and with such success, as to encourage others to emulate their example. Those, who pursue it, cannot fail to meet with encouragement. The subject of the nature and interpretation of language is in itself, independent of any remote consequences, one of exceeding interest, and demands success. When INTERPRETATION is conducted on the principles here laid down, it is no longer a business of conjugations and declensions merely, it is not a mere dry comparison of words, but the study of the philosophy of human nature.

**RULE FIRST ;—**The interpreter must have a good, grammatical knowledge of the vernacular tongue of the writer, whom he interprets. This, no doubt, is evident ;—it being a necessary, preliminary step.

**RULE SECOND ;—**The interpreter should have a philosophical knowledge of the language. Something more is necessary than a knowledge of single words, of declensions and conjugations, and of the rules of syntax. He must be acquainted with the prevailing spirit, or what are in this chapter termed the characteristicks of the language. He must inform himself of the history of the people, learn their peculiar associations, their customs, the state of the arts, &c. In no other way can he understand the true spirit, or have, what may be otherwise called, a philosophical knowledge of any language ; and without such knowledge he can never do justice to his author. (See §. 141.)

**RULE THIRD ;—**He must know something of the author himself, whatever is peculiar in his situation, or, in other words, his personal history. If languages have characteristicks or a style of their own, it is certainly not less true of individual authors ; and this diversity is partly owing to the peculiarities of their private fortunes. We cannot dissent from the saying of Petruchio in the play—

“ ’Tis the mind, that makes the body rich.”

It may be safely admitted, that the mind is not wholly dependent on outward circumstances. If it be truly great, it will show something of the excellence of its nature in all situations, in want, in woe, in persecution, in ignorance

itself, as the "sun breaks through clouds." But it is no less true, that circumstances are never without their influence; they give to the mind a new direction; and almost impart to it, in some instances, a new character. Hence the importance of this rule. We are to inquire amid what scenery of nature the writer dwelt? What early superstitions were made familiar to his mind? In what political and religious principles he was educated? What was his personal calling and the degree of his rank in life? What was his treatment from men? and what his peculiar views of human character? And it is not, until these things are made known to us, that we are fully prepared to estimate what he has written.

The remarks here made admit of an illustration in almost all writers of any original genius. But to take an instance, which is familiar, and on that account perhaps is best chosen, it may be confidently said, that they may be illustrated from the writings of the New Testament. We observe a difference in the style of Matthew and Luke, of Paul and John. The situations in which they were placed, and circumstances under which they acted, had undoubtedly an influence on their character, and through their character on their writings, but this was not the whole origin of these peculiarities. Even the natural temperament of the writer, by a powerful sympathy, communicates itself to the written composition; and while that of Paul is abrupt and vehement, like the soul of its author, that of John seems to express, in its very words and combinations, his affectionate disposition.

The apostle Paul, in particular, is a fortunate instance, to show the importance of attending to the peculiarities of individual writers. Peculiarities—whatever cause they may have arisen from—may be discovered in his writings, in the use even of single words. For instance, the word, *KATARGEIN*, signifying to remove, destroy, kill, make free, is very seldom found in any Greek classic author, but is found twenty six times in the apostle's writings; only once in all the other books of the New Testament.

St. Paul has sometimes employed such words, as he found

used in common conversation, and which, although not unfrequent in common discourse, would have hardly been considered admissible in classical writers, certainly not in the sense, in which he employs them. The word, *ἐξουσία*, (1 Cor. xi. 10,) primarily means power, dignity, &c; but appears, by a fashion, which sometimes exists in language no less than in dress and in manners, to have been in the city of Corinth, the name of a woman's head-dress, which was worn, at the time of writing the Epistle to the Corinthians, in that city. There is no reason to think, that it is used in this sense by any other writer, either of the pure Greek, or of the Hebræistick. When, therefore, we learn in regard to the apostle Paul, that he was brought up in the doctrines of the Pharisees, that he afterwards embraced the christian religion, that he was driven from place to place, and resided in many cities, in Rome, in Ephesus, and particularly Corinth, that he was a person of great boldness, decision, and enterprise; a knowledge of these circumstances in his personal fortunes and character throws much light on his writings.

**RULE FOURTH;**—The views, which have been given, lead us to remark, as another and fourth rule, that the interpreter should possess an intimate acquaintance with the particular subject, on which his author treats;—and not only this, should endeavour fully to possess himself of the spirit of the particular species of writing, of which the tract to be interpreted is a specimen, whether it be poetry, the style of essays, of mathematical treatises, of history, or of philosophy.

Nothing is more clear, than that the human mind, when called into exercise, will be differently affected according to the nature of that particular subject, to which its attention is directed. It will be characterized by calm reflections on the more intimate nature or the philosophy of created things; or will be thrown into a series of closely concatenated propositions; or will be animated by a creative power and form thousands of new and glowing images; or will be excited by strong and declamatory impulses according to the characteristic tendencies of the exercise,

about which it is employed. The interpreter cannot do him justice without having his own mind brought into a similar position with the original author's; and in order to this, he must be acquainted not only with the subject of the particular writing in question, but also with the characteristic and spirit of that species of writing, to which it belongs. It would be presumption, not to say injustice in a mathematician, who had exclusively devoted himself to his chosen science, to undertake to pass sentence on the productions of a poet; those mental tendencies and that state of mind, which are adapted to the last mentioned department of literature, not being fitted to the former. It would be no less presumption and injustice for a mere painter to assume the criticism of musical compositions, or for a mere man of polite letters to attempt the interpretation of the writings and an estimation of the character of mathematicians.

**NOTE.** It may seem to be a proper place here, to mention a peculiar difficulty in the interpretation of the Bible, arising from the nature of the subjects there treated of. Revelation is a communication of those things, which could not have been fully learnt, and some of them could not have been learnt in any degree, by our unassisted faculties. It is a declaration of such facts, as eye hath not seen, and ear hath not heard.

As, therefore, we derive our ideas from sensation and from what takes place in our own minds, it ought not to surprise us, that our weak and limited understandings are incapable of forming a perfect conception of God, of angels, of spiritual bodies, of the soul being brought to judgment, of the resurrection from the dead, &c. The words, which are employed on these subjects, are not without meaning, but such is the nature of the things signified by the words, that the meaning of them is often necessarily obscure to us; and we here find a favourable opportunity both for the exercise of that religious feeling, which is termed faith, as to the things themselves, and also for the exercise of charity, when our own interpretations do not agree with those of any of our erring fellow beings.

## CHAPTER THIRTEENTH.

### PRINCIPLES OF MENTAL ASSOCIATION.

§. 150. *Of the meaning of mental association and of its general principles or laws.*

Our thoughts and feelings follow each other in a regular train. Of this statement no one needs any other proof, than his individual experience ;—we all know, not only, that our minds are susceptible of new states, but what is more, that this capability of new states is not fortuitous, but has its laws. Therefore, we not only say, that our thoughts and feelings succeed each other, but that this antecedence and sequence is in a *regular* train ;—a circumstance in our intellectual economy, which, it may be just observed, has the most direct and important bearing on our preservation and happiness. To this regular and established consecution of the states of the mind we give the name of MENTAL ASSOCIATION.

The term, ASSOCIATION, is perhaps preferable to any other. It may, with no little appearance of reason, be objected to the word, SUGGESTION, which has sometimes been employed, that it seems to imply a positive power or efficiency of the preceding state of the mind in producing the subsequent. But of the existence of such an efficiency we have no evidence. All that we know is the fact, that our thoughts and feelings, under certain circumstances, appear together and keep each other company ;—And this is what is understood to be expressed, and is all, that is expressed, by the term, ASSOCIATION.

By the principles or laws of association, we mean no other, than the general designation of those circumstances, under which the regular consecution of mental states, which has been mentioned, occurs. The following may be mentioned as among the primary principles of association, although it is not necessary to take upon us to assert, either that the enumeration is complete, or that some



better arrangement of these laws might not be proposed, —*viz.* RESEMBLANCE, CONTRAST, CONTIGUITY in time and place, and CAUSE AND EFFECT.

§. 151. *Resemblance the first general principle of association.*

New trains of ideas and new emotions are occasioned by resemblance ; but when we say, that they are occasioned in this way, all that is meant is, that there is a new state of mind, immediately subsequent to the perception of the resembling object. Of the efficient cause of this new state of mind under these circumstances, we can only say, the Creator of the soul has seen fit to appoint this connection in its operations, without our being able, or deeming it necessary to give any further explanation. A traveller, wandering in a foreign land, finds himself in the course of his sojournings in the midst of aspects of nature not unlike those, where he has formerly resided, and the fact of this resemblance becomes the antecedent to new states of mind ;—there is distinctly brought before him the scenery, which he has left, his own woods, his waters, and his home. The result is the same in any other case, whenever there is a resemblance between what we now experience, and what we have previously experienced. We have been acquainted, for instance, at some former period with a person, whose features appeared to us to possess some peculiarity, a breadth and openness of the forehead, an uncommon expression of the eye, or some other striking mark ;—to-day we meet a stranger in the crowd, by which we are surrounded, whose features are of a somewhat similar cast, and the resemblance at once vividly suggests the likeness of our old acquaintance.

§. 152. *Resemblance in every particular not necessary.*

It is not necessary, that the RESEMBLANCE should be complete in every particular, in order to its being a principle or law of association. It so happens, for instance, that we see a painted portrait of a female countenance, which

is adorned with a ruff of a peculiar breadth and display; and we are, in consequence, immediately reminded of queen Elizabeth. Not because there is any resemblance between the features before us and those of the English sovereign, but because in all the painted representations, which we have seen of her, she is uniformly set off with this peculiarity of dress, with a ruff like that, which we now see. Here the resemblance between the suggesting thing and that, which is suggested, is not a complete resemblance, does not exist in all the particulars, in which they may be compared together, but is limited to a part of the dress.

That a single resembling circumstance, (and perhaps one of no great importance,) should so readily suggest the complete conception of another object or scene, which is made up of a great variety of parts, seems to admit of some explanation in this way. We take, for example, an individual;—the idea, which we form of the individual is a complex one, made up of the forehead, eyes, lips, hair, general figure, dress, &c. These separate, subordinate ideas, when combined together, and viewed as a whole, have a near analogy to any of our ideas, which are compounded and are capable of being resolved into elements more simple. When, therefore, we witness a ruff of a size and decoration more than ordinary, we are at once reminded of that ornament in the habiliments of the British queen; and this on the ground of resemblance. But this article in the decorations of her person is the foundation of only one part of a very complex state of mind, which embraces the features and the general appearance. As there has been a long continued co-existence of those separate parts, which make up this complex state, the recurrence to the mind of one part or of one idea is necessarily attended with the recurrence of all the others. They sustain the relation of near friends; they form a group, and do not easily and willingly admit of a separation. The principle, which maintains in the relation of co-existence such states of the mind, as may be considered as grouped together, is the same with that, which so steadily and permanently

combines the parts of mixed modes or other complex ideas, and is no less effectual in its operation. What this principle is will more fully appear from remarks, shortly to be made, on contiguity in time and place.

§. 153. *Of resemblance in the effects produced.*

Resemblance operates, as an associating principle, not only when there is a likeness or similarity in the things themselves, but also when there is a resemblance in the effects, which are produced upon the mind.

The ocean, when greatly agitated by the winds, and threatening every moment to overwhelm us, produces in the mind an emotion, similar to that, which is caused by the presence of an angry man, who is able to do us harm. And in consequence of this similarity in the effects produced, they reciprocally bring each other to our recollection.

Dark woods, hanging over the brow of a mountain, cause in us a feeling of awe and wonder, like that, which we feel, when we behold, approaching us, some aged person, whose form is venerable for his years, and whose name is renowned for wisdom and justice. It is in reference to this view of the principle, on which we are remarking, that the following comparison is introduced in Akenside's Pleasures of the Imagination.

———"Mark the sable woods,  
 "That shade sublime yon mountain's nodding brow;  
 "With what religious awe the solemn scene  
 "Commands your steps! As if the reverend form  
 "Of Minos or of Numa should forsake  
 "The Elysian seats, and down the embowering glade  
 "Move to your pausing eye."

As we are so constituted, that all nature produces in us certain effects, causes certain emotions, similar to these, which are caused in us in our intercourse with our fellow-beings, it so happens that, in virtue of this fact, the natural world becomes living, animated, operative. The ocean is in *anger*; the sky *smiles*; the cliff *frowns*; the aged woods are *venerable*; the earth and its productions are no longer a dead mass, but have an existence, a soul, an agency.

We see here the foundation of metaphorical language ; and it is here, that we are to look for the principles, by which we are to determine the propriety or impropriety of its use.

In every metaphor there is some analogy or resemblance ; it is a comparison or simile in its most concise form. There is an examination instituted and circumstances of similitude are detected ; not, however, by a long and laborious process, but in a single word. Hence it is the language of strong emotion ; and as such, is peculiarly the language of uncivilized nations, and, in general, of the most spirited parts of the poetry of those, that are civilized.

§. 154. *Resemblances in sounds ; alliteration, &c.*

Our states of mind are associated, one with another, not merely by resemblances existing in the external and visible appearances of things, to which those states or ideas correspond ; nor is the fact of their association limited to resemblances in the effects resulting from them ; they may also be associated by similitudes of various degrees in the words, which are appointed, as their signs. Sounds, which in a similar manner impress the organ of hearing, reciprocally suggest each other ; and this is especially true of words, whether they convey the same or similar meaning, or not. Thus, it is not impossible, that powders may suggest patches, and billets-doux may be associated with Bibles, not because there is any resemblance in the things, between powders and patches, billets-doux and Bibles, but because the words begin with the same letters, and there is, consequently, a slight resemblance in the sounds. It is evidently in consequence of the operation of association in this manner, that we find these very things brought together in a line of Pope's Rape of the Lock ;

" Puffs, powders, patches, Bibles, billets-doux."

This is an instance of what is termed **ALLITERATION**, an artifice in poetical style, which is not unfrequently employed, and sometimes with good effect.

**ALLITERATION**, if the meaning of the term be not al-

ready quite familiar, is the repetition of the same letter at the beginning of different words or any emphatick part of the same word, at certain short intervals. The following, in addition to the one already given, are instances of this practice.

"Up the high hill he heaves a huge round stone." Pope.

"Soon he soothed the soul to pleasures." Dryden.

"To high-born Hoel's harp, or soft Llewellyn's lay." Gray.

The poet often finds himself prodigally furnished with words, which would be suitable for alliterations. And his richness in such terms can be ascribed to nothing else, than the faculty of association, operating in the manner described;—with this additional circumstance in the case of the poet, that the operation is quickened and made more effectual, by his practice of seeking for words, which have a similarity of termination. It is possible, that the frequency of the recurrence of such terms operates, as a temptation to the poetical writer to employ them and to form stanzas, containing alliteration, more frequently than he ought to. Whatever may be the difference of opinion as to the positive merit or want of merit in this species of ornament, all readily admit, that its value cannot be accounted great. It is, therefore, to be employed with caution, and suits better on slight occasions and in subjects of no very serious import, than in those of a solemn and important nature.

Its good results may, for the most part, be summed up in these particulars;—(1) It sometimes affords us pleasure by reminding us of the power of the writer, who is able to express his meaning not only under the restraints of rhyme, but of those additional shackles, which alliteration so evidently imposes.—(2) Sometimes the meaning is more strongly expressed, than it could possibly be without alliteration, as in this instance;

"Up the high hill he heaves a huge, round stone."

The same might be shown in many other cases, especially in those, where the poet tries to imitate, which he sometimes does, by the structure and sound of his verses the thing, which he describes.—(3) As a rough stanza at

times is thought to be no defect, but rather the contrary, because it improves the others by contrast ; so lines, with alliterations, which are imagined to fail on the other hand or by excess of harmony, may break in upon the oftentimes monotonous sameness of poetick numbers, and improve the general aspect of the piece for the same reason, as the stanzas, that are inordinately deficient in smoothness.

§. 155. *Contrast the second general or primary principle.*

CONTRAST is another principle, by which our successive mental states are suggested ; or, in other terms, when there are two objects, or events, or situations of a character precisely opposite, the idea or conception of one is immediately followed by that of the other. When the discourse is of the *palace* of the king, how often are we reminded, in the same breath, of the *cottage* of the peasant ! And thus wealth and poverty, the cradle and the grave, hope and despair are found in publick speeches and in declamations from the pulpit almost always going together and keeping each other company. The truth is, they are connected together in our thoughts by a distinct and operative principle ; they accompany each other, not because there is any resemblance in the things thus associated, but in consequence of their very marked contrariety. Darkness reminds of light, heat of cold, friendship of enmity ; the sight of the conqueror is associated with the memory of the conquered, and when beholding men of deformed and dwarfish appearance, we are at once led to think of those of erect figure or of Patagonian size. Contrast, then, is no less a principle or law of association, than resemblance itself.

In those writers, who describe human action and suffering, and who make it a point to be true to nature, we have illustrations of the operations of this principle. In the memoir of the captivity of Mrs. Johnson, one of those deeply interesting sketches, which acquaint us with the sufferings of the early settlers of this country, and which are worthy of being read in as much as they teach us the worth of that peace and prosperity, which are now enjoyed, and the

amount of toil and suffering, which purchased them, we find the following instance of the power of this law of our constitution.—“After my feelings were a little quickened by warmth, my sad portion was brought me, consisting of the duck’s head and a gill of broth. As I lifted the unsavoury morsel with a trembling hand to my mouth, I cast my thoughts back a few days to a time, when from a board plentifully spread in my own house, I ate my food with a merry heart. The wooden spoon dropped from my feeble hand. The *contrast* was too affecting.”

There is a little book entitled the *LEPER OF AOST*, translated from the French of Lemaistre, and although we can pretend to no acquaintance with the character or writings of the author further than can be inferred from this specimen, we cannot doubt, that a tract of so much interest on such a subject must have come from a mind of no ordinary qualities. The book is mentioned here in consequence of

*Note.* The subject of those states of mind, which are called *apparitions* as will be seen by those, who consult that chapter, is left imperfect. The facts, which have been hitherto collected, are so few in number, as hardly to justify us in laying down general principles and offering solutions with much confidence. In the above-mentioned book, *the leper of Aost*, there are statements of intellectual operations, which agree with what is said in the chapter on *apparitions*, and illustrate the remarks there made. The writer represents the leper’s mind to be partially affected by the sufferings of the body and to have become altered from what it was. But these strange states of mental alienation occur chiefly in the night, when he is reposing on his pillow, but he tells us, they are not dreams, neither is he asleep. The statement admits of being compared in particular with §. 96 and 97. “I yield (says the leper) to extraordinary impressions, which I feel only in these unhappy moments. Sometimes it is, as if an irresistible power were dragging me to a fathomless abyss. Sometimes I see nothing but bleak forms; when I endeavour to examine them, they cross each other with the rapidity of lightning, increase in approaching, and soon are like mountains, which crush me under their weight. At other times, I see dark clouds rise from the earth around me; they come over me like an inundation, which increases, advances, and threatens to engulf me; and when I try to rise in order to free myself from these dreadful images, it seems as if I were retained by invisible ties, which enchain all my powers. You will perhaps believe this to be merely dreams; but I am not sleeping. I see always the same objects, and these horrible sensations exceed all my other sensations.” *Leper of Aost*, p. 17.

its philosophical truth in illustrating the effects of the principle of association now under consideration. Like all persons, affected with the leprosy, the subject of the disease is represented as an object of dread no less than of pity to others, and while he is an outcast from the society of men, he is a loathsome spectacle even to himself. But what is the condition of his mind? What are the subjects of his thoughts? The tendencies of his intellectual nature prevent his thinking of wretchedness alone. His extreme misery aggravates itself by suggesting scenes of ideal happiness, and his mind revels in a paradise of delights, merely to give greater intensity to his actual woes by contrasting them with imaginary bliss.—“I represent to myself continually (says the Leper) societies of sincere and virtuous friends; families, blessed with health, fortune, and harmony. I imagine, I see them walk in groves, greener and fresher, than these, the shade of which makes my poor happiness; brightened by a sun more brilliant, than that, which sheds its beams on me;—And their destiny seems to me as much more worthy of envy, in proportion as my own is the more miserable.”

§. 156. *Practical and moral applications of this principle.*

The remarks made in the preceding section on the LEPER OF AOST, naturally lead us to offer some brief observations on the practical and moral results of this law of association.

FIRST;—It operates as a powerful incitement to action, and may, therefore, in this respect be said to have a practical application.—A person finds himself poor, unknown, unhonoured. He is fully sensible of the position, which he holds, and it is a source of mortification and grief. But while he is deeply sensible of his poverty, obscurity, and want of influence, the busy interference of this law of his mental constitution constantly brings up in his mind the ideas of wealth, of honour, and of notoriety. As gilded edifices, although equally distant, appear nearer, than those of a less splendid exterior; so when the mind paints before



us bright images of future good, we think them almost within our grasp, because we so distinctly behold them. As, therefore, the principle of contrast suggests to us some future happiness, when we are sensible, that our present condition and enjoyment are below what they might and should be, it may fairly be laid down among its good, practical results, that it furnishes us with an incitement to exertion. And the more so, as the views, which it presents to the mind, are generally distinct, and their influence will, of consequence, be proportionally augmented.

**SECOND ;**—It may be considered as one of the moral results of this principle, that it operates as a source of happiness to us, whenever those objects, which we have any length of time been in pursuit of, are obtained. The principle of contrast leads us back to what we were before ; we look down from our present circumstances as from a height, and the altitude, which we now occupy, seems to be increased, by the recollection of our former depressions.

**THIRD ;**—Let it be remarked further, that CONSCIENCE owes a great part of the power, which it is able to exercise over the wicked, to this principle. It is from a knowledge of its tendencies, that solitary confinements have been so strongly recommended in publick penitentiaries. Separate the prisoner from his associates, leave his thoughts to follow each other as nature prompts, and what will be the subjects of them ? He will think of what he once was, and compare it with what he now is. He will place side by side a good name with a bad one, the charms of virtue with the deformities of vice, honour and dishonour, wretchedness and bliss, till the agitations of his own bosom, the lashes of his own conscience become far more terrible than chains, or any species of corporeal inflictions.

But it will be said, does not this principle of the mind operate in the same way in respect to the good, when they have been unfortunate ? It undoubtedly does. They think, and cannot do otherwise, of their former prosperity ; and their present ill success and depression appears the greater in consequence of such remembrances. But happily they

are supported by a consciousness of rectitude under what might be otherwise insupportable. It is a remark of Goldsmith, expressed in his happy manner, that one of the noblest objects in the universe is a good man, struggling with adversity.

§. 157. *This principle of association the foundation of antithesis.*

In writers of acknowledged taste and discernment, we find the rhetorical figure of ANTITHESIS employed, which is the placing of two objects or ideas in opposition. The fact, that such writers occasionally employ this figure might lead us to suppose, (which is the truth,) that it has its foundation in the human mind, viz. in the principle of association, to which we give the name of contrast. In one of the tragedies of Southern we find certain expressions, which are here introduced not only in illustration of the general principle, but as happily exemplifying some remarks in the preceding section.

—————" Could I forget  
 " What I have been, I might the better bear  
 " What I am destined to. I am not the first,  
 " That have been wretched ;—But to think how much  
 " I have been happier. —————

Here the present is placed in opposition with the past, and happiness is contrasted with misery ; not by a cold and strained artifice, but by the natural impulses of the mind, which is led to associate together things, that are the reverse of each other. I say not by a cold artifice but naturally ;—for what man ever was there, or can be, that has been cast down from the heights of fortune, whether it have happened with his guilt or his innocence, and does not most readily and unavoidably look back from his present depressed condition to his former prosperities ?

In the poem of the Pleasures of Hope there is this passage.

" Yet at thy call the hardy tar pursued,  
 " Pale, but intrepid, sad, but unsubdued.

As paleness is an appearance of the countenance, which

is sometimes understood to indicate fear or cowardice, there is occasion given to mention the opposite; the mind naturally thinks of it. A similar remark will apply to the last clause of the stanza, and the whole passage is one of great ease and beauty, besides being spirited.

The often repeated eulogium of Mr. Burke on the philanthropick Howard is a fine instance of this figure, and shows to what good purpose it may be applied on suitable occasions by persons of genius.—“He has visited all Europe,—not to survey the sumptuousness of palaces, or the stateliness of temples; not to make accurate measurements of the remains of ancient grandeur, nor to form a scale of the curiosity of modern arts, nor to collect medals or collate manuscripts;—but to dive into the depths of dungeons; to plunge into the infection of hospitals; to survey the mansions of sorrow and pain; to take the gauge and dimensions of misery, depression, and contempt, to remember the forgotten, to attend to the neglected, to visit the forsaken, and compare and collate the distresses of all men in all countries.”—This figure of rhetorick, therefore, being founded in our mental constitution, is sometimes employed with success, but whenever there is such frequency in the use of it, as to betray artifice rather than natural emotion, it loses its effect, and becomes a vice rather than an excellence in style.

Antithesis is frequently employed, and to very good purpose, in short, moral sayings, and in any writings whatever, which purposely adopt the concise and emphatick method of aphorisms. It is a great object with writers of this kind to have their sayings remembered. In throwing them into the form of antitheses, they afford great help to the memory, because when one part of the aphoristick sentence is known, the power of association, operating by the principle or law of contrast, immediately calls up the contrasted or parallel part of it.

§. 158. *Contiguity the third general or primary principle.*

Those thoughts and feelings, which have been connected together by nearness of time and place, are readily suggested by each other ; and, consequently, contiguity in those respects is rightly reckoned, as another and third primary principle of our mental associations. When we think of Palestine, for instance, we very readily and naturally think of the Jewish nation, of the patriarchs, of the prophets, of the Saviour, and of the apostles, because Palestine was their place of residence, and the theatre of their actions. So that this is evidently an instance, where the suggestions are chiefly regulated by proximity of place. When a variety of acts and events have happened nearly at the same period, whether in the same place or not, one is not thought of without the others being closely associated with it, owing to proximity of time ;—When, therefore, the particular event of the crucifixion of the Saviour is mentioned, we are necessarily led to think of various other events, which occurred about the same period, such as the treacherous conspiracy of Judas, the denial of Peter, the conduct of the Roman soldiery, the rending of the veil of the temple, and the temporary obscuration of the sun.

The mention of Egypt suggests the Nile, the Pyramids, Cæsar, Cleopatra, the battle of Aboukir. The naming of the AMERICAN REVOLUTION immediately fills the mind with recollections of Washington, Greene, and many of their associates, whose fortune it was to enlist their exertions in behalf of freedom in the same country and at the same period.

The following passage from captain King's continuation of Cooke's last voyage furnishes a remarkable example of the operations of this principle ;—"While we were at dinner in this miserable hut, on the banks of the river, Awatska, and the guests of a people, with whose existence we had before been scarce acquainted, and at the extremity of the habitable globe, a solitary, half-worn, pewter spoon, whose shape was familiar to us attracted our attention ; and, on examination, we found it stamped on the back with

the word, LONDON. I cannot pass over this circumstance in silence out of gratitude for the many pleasant thoughts, the anxious hopes, and tender remembrances it excited in us. Those, who have experienced the effects, that long absence, and extreme distance from their native country, produce in the mind, will readily conceive the pleasure such a trifling incident can give."—The beauty of this illustration consists not so much in the city or place having been suggested in consequence of their seeing its name impressed on the pewter spoon, although this may be supposed to have happened on the principle of contiguity, as in the circumstance, that such a multitude of other pleasing recollections thronged around the memory of that place. When they thought of London, they thought of their homes,—they thought of the inmates of those homes,—they thought of a thousand incidents, which they had there witnessed ;—a striking illustration of the degree of importance, which may be accumulated on the most trivial circumstance, when that circumstance can be made to connect itself effectually with any general principles of our mental constitution.

That, which we have set down, as the third general law of mental association, is more extensive in its influence than any others. It has been remarked with truth, that proximity in time and place forms the whole calendar of the great mass of mankind. They pay but little attention to the arbitrary eras of chronology ; but date events by each other, and speak of what happened at the time of some dark day, or of some great eclipse, or of some war or revolution, or when one neighbour built a house, or another lost a child. The practice of associating a considerable number of facts with some place, or with some event too prominent and wonderful to be easily forgotten, is the great and almost the only instrument, which the mass of people employ in retaining the multitude of particulars of a personal or local nature.

§. 159. *Cause and effect the fourth primary principle.*

There are certain facts or events, which hold to each other the relation of invariable antecedence and sequence. That fact or event, to which some other one sustains the relation of constant antecedence, is in general called an *effect*;—And that fact or event, to which some other one holds the relation of invariable sequence, has in general the name of a *cause*. Now there may be no resemblance in the things, which reciprocally bear this relation, there may be no contrariety, and it is by no means necessary, that there should be contiguity in time or place, as the meaning of the term, contiguity, is commonly understood. There may be *CAUSE* and *EFFECT* without any one or all of these circumstances. But it is a fact, which is known to every one's experience, that when we think of the cause in any particular instance, we naturally think of the effect, and, on the contrary, the knowledge or recollection of the effect brings to mind the cause;—And in view of this well-known and general experience, there is good reason for reckoning *CAUSE* and *EFFECT* among the general principles of our mental associations. What we here understand by principles or laws will be recollected, viz. The general designation of those circumstances, under which the regular consecution of mental states occurs.

It is on the principle of cause and effect, that when we see a surgical instrument or any engine of torture, we have an idea of the pain, which they are fitted to occasion, and for a moment are tempted to imagine, that we ourselves are partially the subjects of it. The sight of a wound, inflicted however long before, suggests to us the instrument, by which it was made. When we witness any of our fellow beings in distress, we naturally think of the particular cause of it, if we know what it is; and, if we are ignorant, we make it a subject of inquiry. When we have good news to communicate, we please ourselves with the thought of the joy, which it will occasion, and the bearer of afflictive tidings cannot but anticipate the grief, which the annunciation of them will produce.

§. 160. *Secondary principles of mental association.*

There are a variety of circumstances, which modify and slightly control the influence of the general laws or principles of association, and these by way of distinction are called **SECONDARY**. They are as follows ;—

(1) Our mental states will, in the first place, be more or less readily associated, according as they existed together for a greater or less length of time at first. Innumerable objects pass before us, which but very slightly arrest our attention ; & although a connection is formed among them by the general principles of association, the connection is weak and easily broken, and always of short duration. We cannot, therefore, in general rely on the future remembrance of objects, unless we feel so much interest in them, as to lead us to dwell on them for some time.—(2) The probability of our mental states being associated by the general principles, will depend in some measure, secondly, on the character of the original feelings, and will be greater or less, according as those feelings were *more or less lively*. Bright objects are more readily recalled, than faint or obscure ; also great joys and sorrows, while the many slight pleasures and pains, which are constantly occurring, are almost instantly forgotten.

(3) The parts of any mental train are the more readily suggested, thirdly, in proportion as they have been the *more frequently renewed*. Having read a sentence a number of times, we find ourselves able to repeat it out of book, which we could not do with merely reading it once.

(4) In the fourth place, our trains of thought and emotions will be found to be more or less strongly connected, according as they are *more or less recent*. We remember many incidents, even of a trifling nature, which occurred to-day or the present week, while those of yesterday or of last week are forgotten. There is an exception to this law, which should be mentioned. The associated feelings of old men, which were formed in their youth and the early part of manhood, are more readily revived, than those of later origin. This point will be further remarked on in

the chapter on MEMORY. This exception, however, it may be observed here, does not hold universally, even in the case of extreme age. The general rule holds, when the time is not extended far back. Events, which happened but a few hours before, are remembered, while there is an utter forgetfulness of those, which happened a few weeks or even days before.

(5) Our feelings, in the fifth place, are associated more strongly, as each has coexisted *less* with other feelings. When we have heard a song but from one person, it can scarcely be heard by us again without recalling that person to our memory. If we have heard the same words and air frequently sung by others, there is much less chance of this particular suggestion.

(6) The primary or general laws of association are modified, in the sixth place, by diversities in temper and disposition.—In the minds of two persons, the one of a cheerful, the other of a gloomy disposition, the trains of thought will be very different. This difference is finely illustrated in those beautiful poems of Milton, *L'ALLEGRO* and *IL PENSEROSO*. *L'ALLEGRO* or the cheerful man finds pleasure and cheerfulness in every object, which he beholds;—The great sun puts on his amber light, the mower whets his scythe, the milk-maid sings,

“ And every shepherd tells his tale

“ Under the hawthorn in the dale.

But the man of a melancholy disposition, *IL PENSEROSO*, chooses the evening for his walk, as most suitable to the temper of his mind; he listens from some lonely hillock to the distant curfew, and loves to hear the song of that “sweet bird,

—That shun’st the noise of folly,

“ Most musical, most melancholy.

Further;—Our trains of suggested thoughts will be modified by those temporary feelings, which may be regarded, as exceptions to the more general character of our dispositions. The cheerful man is not always cheerful, nor is the melancholy man at all times equally sober and contemplative. They are known to exchange characters for



whole days together, sometimes in consequence of good or ill health, or of happy or adverse fortune, and sometimes for causes, which cannot be easily explained. So that our mental states will be found to follow each other, with a succession, varying not only with the general character of our temper and dispositions, but with the transitory emotions of the day or hour.

(7) The trains of our suggestions are modified, in the seventh place, by our particular pursuit or profession in life.—When men of different pursuits or professions read a book, or hear a story, it will be seen, that they associate very different ideas with what they hear or read. If a traveller happens in their company, the man of letters immediately inquires what new works are about to be published in his country; the merchant is anxious to hear of the price of wheat or iron; the soldier insists on knowing, who is to take the place of the general or field-marshal lately displaced; and the politician requests an explanation of the late manifesto, or to be informed of the articles of the new constitution.

(8) The general or primary principles, by which our thoughts are connected together, are modified, eighthly, by an additional circumstance of so much influence, as to entitle it to be reckoned among the secondary laws of association; viz. *constitutional differences in mental character*.—Whether the origin of such differences, is to be referred to the mind itself, or to varieties in bodily temperament, is not necessary for our present purpose to be inquired into. Admitting the existence of such original diversities, we may suppose them, in the first place, to have the effect either of limiting and weakening, or of extending and augmenting the power of all the primary laws of association. In other words, they have a *general* influence, either favourable or unfavourable. The great varieties in the power of remembering, which are so often observed, may be attributed chiefly to this secondary law, and to that form of its influence, which has just been supposed, and is a proof of the correctness of the supposition.—But original, constitutional differences sometimes modify the influence of

the four general and primary laws of association in another and less impartial way; viz. by giving greater strength to one set of associations, than to another. Thus,—the mental associations, which are formed and sustained on the principle of resemblance or analogy, constitute one class; those, which are connected by the law of contiguity form another; and here it is, that we mark a distinction in the mental operations of men, which we think must be ascribed to original diversities in the intellectual organization. In one mind, for instance, the associations, which are ranked under one of these classes, are easily and readily suggested; the other class of associations is not;—but observe another person, in whom there is, as we contend, a constitutional difference, and we find, that it is just the reverse, and the class of associations, which, in the first instance, were easily suggested, are, in the latter case, suggested with great difficulty. One mind perceives the resemblances of objects, whether more or less obvious, and their relations of cause and effect; another mind of a different constitution observes only their contiguity in time and place. The fact is undeniable; and the solution, which we propose, as on the whole the least exceptionable, is, that there are in men certain natural differences attributable originally either to the mind exclusively, or to the influence of the physical system over the mind, or to both.

The laws of association may here properly be given in a condensed view, as follows: The general principles or laws of association, which are sometimes called the primary laws, are these, RESEMBLANCE, CONTRAST, CONTIGUITY in time and place, and CAUSE and EFFECT.—The secondary laws of association, which give such great variety to the results of the primary principles, are these—(1) Differences in the length of time of the co-existence of the associated feelings at first;—(2) Their greater or less degree of liveliness;—(3) The frequency of their renewal;—(4) The circumstance of their being more or less recent;—(5) The degree or extent of their co-existence with other feelings;—(6) Diversities in temper and disposition;—(7) The

influence of particular professions and pursuits ;—(8) Certain constitutional differences in mental character.

§. 161. *Genius nothing more than particular tendencies of association.*

Much has been said of genius. To those, who have been supposed to possess it, praise and admiration have been amply given, as if they were peculiarly endowed. One man is said to have a genius for mathematicks, another for poetry ; and war also, and politicks, and mechanical employments have their geniuses. One hardly knows in what terms to convey an idea of it, and to do it concisely ; but the common definition has been this,—A talent or aptitude given us by nature, in order to excel in any one thing whatever. Whoever has those qualities, which, when applied to some particular art or science, enable their possessor to excel in it, is commonly called a man of genius.

Stated in other, and, as we conceive, in more philosophical language, genius is a constitutional tendency to form mental associations on the principles of RESEMBLANCE, of CONTRAST, and of CAUSE and EFFECT.

Persons, who show a constitutional inclination to form associations on the principle of CONTIGUITY in time and place, have minds of a lower grade, and are wanting in those penetrating and effective qualities, which are implied in genius. They may be good neighbours and useful citizens, and are especially fitted to excel in the manual practice of the mechanical arts, but it is beyond their power to give new beauties to literature, or new truths to science ; and they seem to be inevitably destined to plod in the paths of humble imitation.

Mention a forest or any wooded field to a man wanting in genius, and he will be likely enough to think of an aged and leafless oak. The thought of it will occur on the principle or law of contiguity, and, consequently, is not beyond the ordinary range of his intellectual power. But the man of genius, as in the description of Pompey in

the *Pharsalia* of Lucan, thinks with no less readiness of that aged and leafless oak, whenever he sees an old and heroick citizen, who stands forth amid the corruptions of his generation, the memorial of better times, and the prop of the commonwealth. But the thought occurs in the latter case on a different principle, that of resemblance or analogy. The former can become a poetical imitator, but the latter only can be the "gifted bard."

A man of no genius might consistently with the law, by which his associations are chiefly regulated, think of meteors, when walking abroad on a cloudy and sultry night; but would by no means be likely to, on merely seeing one of his aged neighbours with a long beard and hair floating in the wind. But how different are the associations in the mind of the author of that sublime poem

**THE BARD !**

" Robed in the sable garb of woe,  
 " With haggard eyes, the poet stood ;  
 " Loos'd his beard, and hoary hair  
 " Stream'd, like a meteor, to the troubled air.

What, therefore, constitutes poetical genius, that intellectual peculiarity, which lays the foundation for a reputation of that kind, is a constitutional tendency to connect together the states of mind in the way, which has been asserted. The subject will appear the clearer when looked at in connection with the remarks in the preceding section on the eighth secondary law of association.

It is to be further observed, that philosophical genius is essentially the same with poetical. Men may be called philosophers, because they have by great industry learnt the discoveries, which others have made, and the inventions, of which they have been the authors. They may imitate their predecessors ; they may employ the same means, which have been employed before, and come to the same results ; but learning and a high reputation do not necessarily imply genius ; so that, if they are philosophers, they are not philosophical geniuses.

GENIUS implies a mind, that will pass from causes to effects, and from effects to causes in cases, where it has not been taught by others ; that, with an almost intuitive read-

iness, is able to draw a parallel between the qualities of objects, without being limited to the circumstances of time and place, and that can deduce important conclusions before unknown from analogies in those things, which have come under its notice.

But if the qualities of genius be originally the same, both in philosophy and poetry, it may be asked, how happens it, that men devote themselves to pursuits so different in their character and results? The most obvious reply, is, that we are influenced by a great variety of circumstances, and are not unfrequently influenced by them, when we are ourselves not fully sensible of it;—such as the mental character of those, with whom we associate, local scenery, natural disposition, climate, government, early reading, &c. These give a direction to those qualities, which constitute genius; and it happens, in this way, that of those persons, whose mental capabilities were originally the same, one gives himself to the science of laws, another to natural philosophy, another to poetry, another to some other of the fine arts.

These views readily suggest an explanation of differences in degrees or strength of genius. There may be a tendency in different individuals to form associations on laws, which involve the resemblances and nature of objects, rather than on the law of mere contiguity; and this is the prominent circumstance in securing to them the character in question. But it does not follow, that it exists in the same degree and with the same strength in all. In some it is more, in others less. To a few the power of perceiving the analogies, and dissimilitudes, and general relations of things is exceedingly great;—and it is to these alone that we can rightly give the credit of *great* geniuses, of being the “lights of their age.”

NOTE. Genius in the philosophical sciences makes itself known by inventions and discoveries. But there is a difference between the two. Mr. Stuart, in remarking on invention in the arts and sciences, draws a distinction between inventions and discoveries which he supposes to be correct and well founded, and is peculiarly happy in his

illustrations. Rather than run the chance of a better opportunity hereafter, we insert his remarks here.

“Before we proceed, it may be proper (says Mr. Stuart) to take notice of the distinction between *Invention* and *Discovery*. The object of the former, as has been frequently remarked, is to produce something which had no existence before; that of the latter, to bring to light something which did exist, but which was concealed from common observation. Thus we say, Otto Guericke invented the air-pump; Sanctorius invented the thermometer; Newton and Gregory invented the reflecting telescope: Galileo discovered the solar spots; and Harvey discovered the circulation of the blood. It appears, therefore, that improvements in the Arts are properly called *inventions*; and that facts brought to light by means of observation, are properly called *discoveries*.

Agreeable to this analogy is the use which we make of these words, when we apply them to subjects purely intellectual. As truth is eternal and immutable, and has no dependence on our belief or disbelief of it, a person who brings to light a truth formerly unknown, is said to make a discovery. A person, on the other hand, who contrives a new method of discovering truth, is called an inventor. Pythagoras, we say, discovered the forty-seventh proposition of Euclid's first book; Newton discovered the binomial theorem: but he invented the method of prime and ultimate ratios; and he invented the method of fluxions.

In general, every advancement in knowledge is considered as a discovery; every contrivance by which we produce an effect, or accomplish an end, is considered as an invention. Discoveries in science, therefore, unless they are made by accident, imply the exercise of invention; and, accordingly, the word *invention* is commonly used to express originality of genius in the sciences, as well as in the arts.”

#### §. 162. *Dependence of transitions in style on association.*

It requires skill rightly to manage the TRANSITIONS in a discourse or poem. to conduct the hearer or reader from

one topick to another without violence to his feelings, and without injury to the natural order, clearness, and interest of the subject. No transitions seem to be admissible, but such as are suggested by association, either by the primary laws alone, or as they are modified by the secondary laws. But when that power holds out a number of ways, in which the passing from one topick to another can be effected, the writer has an opportunity to discover his skill in the selection.

In Goldsmith's poem of the Traveller, the nature of the subject requires frequent transitions, and they are happily managed. In one part of his poem, he describes the descendants of the Romans in their state of effeminacy and debasement; but how does it happen, that immediately after he undertakes a description of the character of the Swiss? In speaking of the present inhabitants of Italy, he sees hardly any thing but indications of indolence and luxury,—but little of vigour, of hardship, of ancient truth. He is led, therefore, by the principle of contrast, to think of conduct, characters, and situations directly the reverse. To think, then, of the Swiss under such circumstances seemed to be almost unavoidable;

“ My soul turn from them!—turn we to survey,  
 “ Where rougher climes a nobler race display,  
 “ Where the bleak Swiss their stormy mansions tread,  
 “ And force a churlish soil for scanty bread.

§. 163. *Of associations suggested by present objects of perception.*

Associated thoughts and emotions, when made to pass through the mind by some sound, which the ear has caught, by some object, which has met the eye, or by any present object of perception whatever, are vivid and strong. Associations, which do not admit any of our present perceptions as a part of the associated train, cannot but impress us, as being in some measure airy and unsubstantial, however distinct. We deeply feel, that they are a part of the experiences of departed days, and which, in departing from us, have become almost, as if they had never been. But

let them partake of our present experience, of what we now feel and know to exist, and they seem to gain new strength; the remembrances are not only distinct, but what was airy and unsubstantial fades away, and they have life, and power, and form.

How often, in the wanderings of life, are we led by some apparently accidental train of thought to the recollection of the residence of our early years and of the incidents, which then occurred! The associations are interesting, but we find it difficult to make them permanent, and they are comparatively faint. But let there be connected with that train of thought the present sound of some musical instrument, which we then used to hear, and of our favourite tune, and it will be found, that the reality of the tune blends itself with the airy conceptions of the mind, and, while we kindle with an illusive rapture, the whole seems to be real. Some illustrations may tend to make these statements more clear and to confirm them.

It is related in one of the published Lectures of Dr. Rush, that an old native African was permitted by his master, a number of years since, to go from home in order to see a lion, that was conducted as a show through the state of New Jersey. He no sooner saw him, than he was so transported with joy, as to express his emotions by jumping, dancing, and loud acclamations, notwithstanding the torpid habits of mind and body, superinduced by half a century of slavery. He had known that animal, when a boy in his native country, and the sight of him suddenly revived the memory of his early enjoyments, his native land, his home, his associates, and his freedom.

There is in the same writer another interesting instance of the power of association, in which he himself had a part, and which will be given in his own words.—“During the time I passed at a country-school, in Cecil County, in Maryland, I often went on a holiday, with my schoolmates, to see an eagle's nest, upon the summit of a dead tree in the neighbourhood of the school, during the time of the incubation of that bird. The daughter of the farmer, in



whose field this tree stood, and with whom I became acquainted, married, and settled in this city about forty years ago. In our occasional interviews, we now and then spoke of the innocent haunts and rural pleasures of our youth, and, among other things, of the eagle's nest in her father's field. A few years ago, I was called to visit this woman when she was in the lowest stage of a typhus fever. Upon entering her room, I caught her eye, and, with a cheerful tone of voice, said only, *The eagle's nest*. She seized my hand, without being able to speak, and discovered strong emotions of pleasure in her countenance, probably from a sudden association of all her early domestic connexions and enjoyments with the words I had uttered. From that time she began to recover. She is now living, and seldom fails, when we meet, to salute me with the echo of the 'eagle's nest.' "

From such illustrations it would seem to be sufficiently clear, that, whenever associated thoughts and emotions are connected with any present perceptions, they are peculiarly strong and vivid. They steal into all the secret chambers of the soul, and seemingly by some magick power impart a deeper intensity to its feelings, and give to the shadowy world of memory the stability of real existence. There are two causes, why such associated feelings should possess more than ordinary strength and vividness.—(1) The particular train of thought and feeling, which is excited in the mind, continues longer than in other cases, in consequence of the greater permanency and fixedness of the present objects of perception, which either suggested the train, or make a part of it. So long as the lion was permitted to remain in the sight of the aged African, so long without interruption was the series of delightful thoughts kept up within him. The bright images, which threw him into such raptures, and awoke stupidity itself, were not fleeting away with every breath, but remained permanent.

The sick lady of Philadelphia saw the physician, with whom she had been acquainted in the early part of life. By mention of the eagle's nest, he vividly recalled the

scenes of those young days. But it was the presence of the person, whose observation had given rise to the train of association, which contributed chiefly to keep it so long in her thoughts. Had it occurred merely from some accidental direction of her own mind, without any present object, which had made a part of it, no doubt her sufferings or other circumstances would soon have banished it.

(2) The second cause of the increased vividness of associations, suggested by a present object of perception or combined with it, is this, viz. The reality of the thing perceived is communicated in the illusions of the moment to the thing suggested.—The trees of the desert were the hiding place of the lion, when the African saw him in early life; and now, after the lapse of so many years, he imagines, that, in the quickened eye of his mind, he beholds the forests of his native soil, because he has before him the proud and powerful animal, that crouched under their shade. And the presence of the monarch of the forest gives a reality not only to woods and deserts; but by a communication of that, which is real to that, which is merely suggested, the whole group of his early experiences, as well as the sight of the animal, which made a part, are revived, and have virtually a real, renewed existence.

These remarks may be properly applied to explain a recent, strong manifestation of feeling in a whole people. The citizens of the United States have a multitude of patriotick associations, connected with their revolutionary war. But those associations, owing to length of time, were by degrees growing dim on the minds of the aged, and made a still more diminished impression on those of the young. In the years 1824—5, La Fayette, the only surviving revolutionary officer of the grade of major-general, came on a visit to this country to see once more the people, for whom he had fought in his youth. All classes flocked to behold him, and to grasp his hand. Nothing could exceed the deep feeling, which existed from one part of the republick to the other. But it was not the individual merely, however strongly the people were attached to him, that awoke such a happy and lofty enthusiasm. All the events and all

the characters of the revolution exist to the present generation in associated states of the mind, and, as La Fayette had long formed a part in those ideal associations, when we were so fortunate, as to see him with our own eyes and touch him with our own hands, the revolution then seemed in a new sense to be real, and all its scenes were *embodied* before us. All his associates in suffering and danger, all the renowned names that once fought by his side, were concentrated in himself, and he was in the midst of us the sole and illustrious representative of a long series of momentous events and of a host of heroick men.

In all the cases, which have been mentioned, the associated feelings were intensely powerful; a multitude of other instances, occurring indeed every day, illustrate the same idea, that they are strong and vivid in an unusual degree, when suggested by a present object of perception. The two circumstances, which have been mentioned, seem to be the most obvious and satisfactory reasons, which can be given in explanation of the fact.

These remarks suggest a rule of some practical consequence to writers of poems, romances, and other works of imagination. They should lay the scene of their works, where there are human beings, not in "Arcadia," nor in "Fairy Land." They should describe men, women, and human nature in its various forms, and local scenery, as they are; and then we can sympathize. We can at least say, that we have seen such beings as they describe, and perhaps that we have travelled in the very region of their residence and amid its natural scenery. Our personal experiences will give a permanency, and substantiality, and consequently a greater interest to the images of the writer, which we might otherwise reject, as being unnatural, or at least affected, and better suited to other classes of beings, than ourselves.

§. 164. *Habits may be resolved into mental associations.*

The word, HABIT, as commonly employed, expresses that facility, which our mental operations or bodily actions acquire in consequence of practice. By long practice we

become so familiar with a certain succession of ideas, that the one not only infallibly suggests the others, but with peculiar quickness, and apparently without any effort of our own;—and, in the same manner, our actions are so closely connected by practice with the states of the mind, that the bodily movements will follow the thoughts without our being conscious of any effort of volition, previous to the active exertion. We apply the term *HABIT* to various classes of persons, to the dexterity of workmen in different manual arts, to the rapidity of the accountant, to the fluency of the extemporaneous speaker. The fact, that the facility, implied in *HABIT*, is owing to practice, we learn from experience.

In all mechanical arts and all cases, where there is a corporeal as well as mental effort, the effect of practice will be found to be partly on the mind, and partly on the body. The muscles, which are at such times employed, become stronger and more obedient to the will. The fact is well known, but we know not, that any one has been able to offer a satisfactory explanation.

The effect of practice on the mind seems to consist wholly in quickening the power of association. Practice is the repetition of a thing. The more frequently our associated trains of thought are repeated, the more readily they occur. This was stated in the third secondary law of association, which is this;—The parts of any mental train are the more readily suggested, in proportion as they have been the *more frequently renewed*. All intellectual habits, therefore, are nothing more than spontaneous mental suggestions, which have become such by frequent repetition. Further remarks, connected with this subject, will be found in the chapter on *ATTENTION*.

#### §.165. *Historical remarks on the doctrine of association.*

Although the tendency of one idea or state of the mind to suggest another must have ever been so obvious as to be generally observed, it required something more than the ordinary powers of discernment and classification, to

hit upon those general principles, by which the associations are regulated. Aristotle, in treating of memory, speaks of these principles in part, and is the first, who is known to have laid down any general rules. He says, that the relations, by which we are led in seeking after or tracing out those thoughts, which do not at once occur, are chiefly three; **RESEMBLANCE, CONTRAST, and CONTIGUITY.**

There is an interesting passage in Cicero on the influence of association in the fifth book *DE FINIBUS*. His remarks illustrate particularly the results of the principle of contiguity. They also strikingly confirm the fact in the doctrine of association, that suggested trains of thought will be more vivid, when they are in some way connected with present objects of perception.

Mr. Locke in his *Essay on the Human Understanding* added a chapter in the fourth edition on the subject of association. This chapter, although it must be confessed to be a very imperfect one, compared with what has since been written on the subject, is mentioned with commendation by Dugald Stewart, and he thinks, it has contributed as much as any thing else in Locke's writings to the subsequent progress of intellectual philosophy. The first edition of the *Essay on the Human Understanding* was published in 1690.

Ernesti, in his *INITIA DOCTRINÆ SOLIDIORIS*, published in 1734, enters into the subject somewhat particularly. He begins with stating the fact of the existence of association, or that the states of the mind are in some way connected together. He then proceeds to give the general law, by which this connection or consecution of states happens, as follows;—Any thought or image in the mind has the power of suggesting the idea of some absent object. It may suggest one, that is in some respects similar to itself, —or one, of which the present is a part,—or one, which has been present together with it on some former occasion.

Mr. Hume gave much attention to this subject. In an *Essay on the association of ideas*, he has the following

passage.—“Though it be too obvious to escape observation, that different ideas are connected together, I do not find, that any philosopher has attempted to enumerate or class all the principles of association; a subject, however, that seems worthy of curiosity. To me there appear to be only three principles of connection among ideas, viz. RESEMBLANCE, CONTIGUITY in time and place, and CAUSE and EFFECT.”

It would seem from this statement, that he was ignorant of the passage in Aristotle above referred to. He differs from the statement which we have preferred on the subject of the primary principles of association, in excluding contrast from the number of them. He considers contrast a mixture of resemblance and causation; his arguments in support of his theory, which are examined in Brown's Lectures on the Mind, are rather specious than convincing.

The doctrine of association makes a considerable figure in the Observations on Man of Dr. Hartley. This work was published in the beginning of 1749. Dr. Hartley does not content himself with giving the mere facts of our mental operations, which are always valuable, however difficult they may be in some cases to be explained; but undertakes also to point out the precise connection of the origin of those facts with certain previous states of the corporeal system. He supposes, that every impression on the senses, caused by an external object, is propagated from the external body to the brain by means of vibrations in the nervous system, or rather by means of the oscillating motion of vibratory particles or vibratiuncles in the nerves. He expressly compares the vibrations or the motions backwards and forwards to the oscillations of pendulums and the tremblings of the particles of sounding bodies. When the vibration antecedent to one idea is in any degree whatever coincident with the vibration of another idea, the recurrence of either of them will have the effect to cause the repetition of the other, and of course the repetition of the idea or mental state. In this way he has proposed to account, not only for the rise or origin of those ideas, which come into the mind from things external to us, but for the

existence of the great law of association. But his speculations on these points, which do not so much concern the facts themselves as their causation or physical history, have been in general regarded, as bordering too much on hypothesis to be particularly deserving of attention.

Almost all late writers on intellectual philosophy have more or less on the subject of association; and some, particularly Dugald Stewart, have written on it with much taste and eloquence. To this writer we are much indebted in this chapter, and also to the late Thomas Brown;—to the latter particularly for his valuable and original remarks on the secondary laws of association for which he is entitled to great credit.

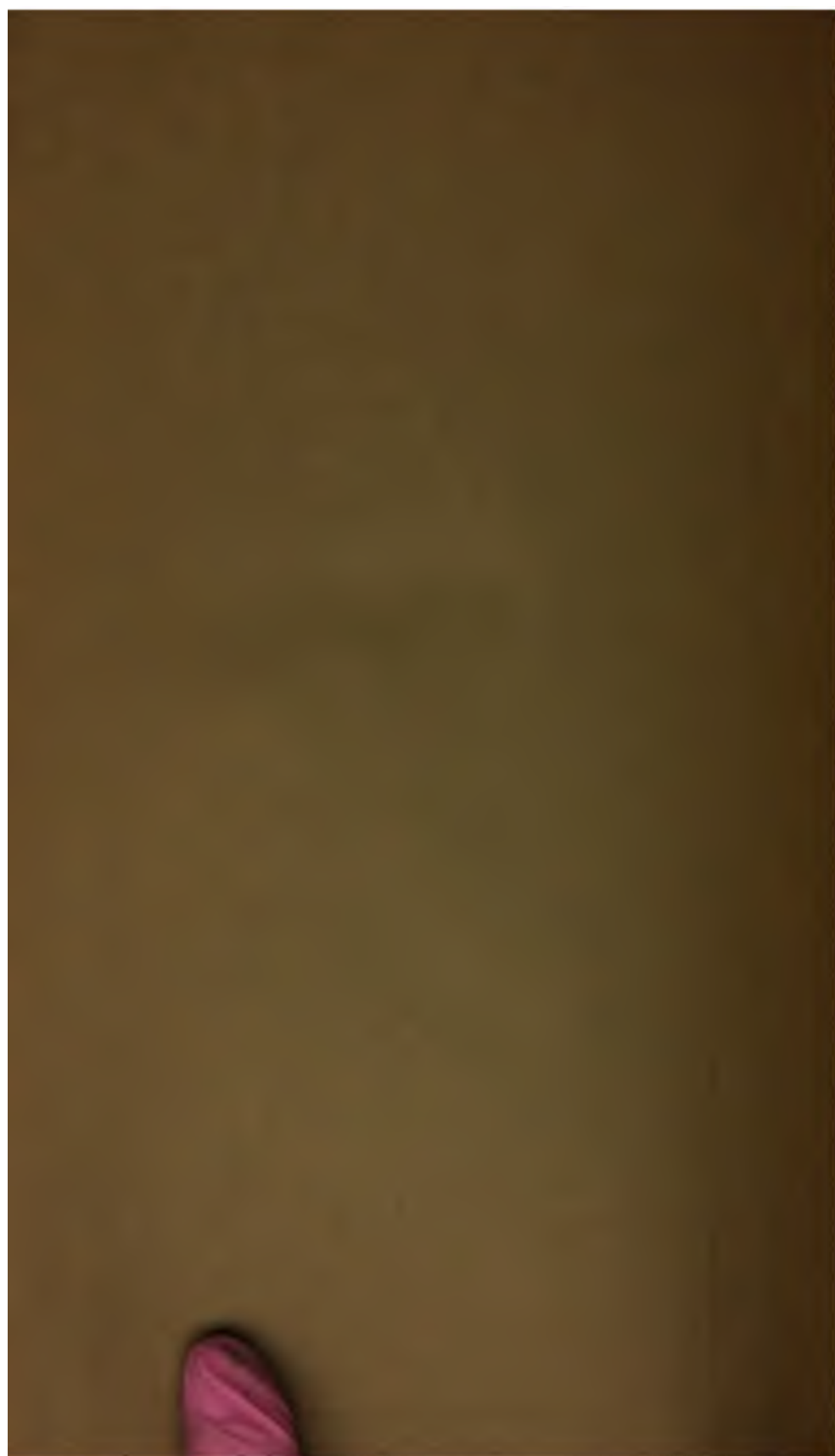
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